OVERSTREET'S

COMIC BOOK MARKETPLACE

NUMBER 2
JUNE 1993

SPECIAL
Steve Ditko
Before Spider-Man

CHECKLIST
The Original Magnus, Robot Fighter

JOE QUESADA Speaks
Batman to X-Factor

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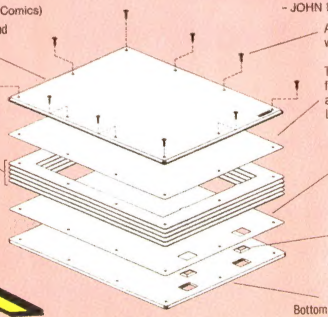
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The talented Batman, X-O Manowar, & X-Factor artist talks candidly with CBM's Editor-In-Chief.

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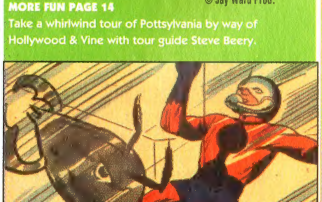
MORE FUN PAGE 14
Take a whirlwind tour of Pottsylvania by way of Hollywood & Vine with tour guide Steve Beery.



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ADVENTURES INTO WEIRD WORDS PAGE 8
Uncle Pat burrows deep into the Ant-Man legacy. You'll be 'Astonished' at what he finds.

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Issue Number 9, June 1993

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

THE GREAT GRADING ODYSSEY

I've just returned from the grading chores at the third annual AACBC Grading Committee at Sothebys in New York. Although grading that many comics can be hard work, for those of us who "live for comics" it is also a labor of love. (See both CBM Scrapbook and Roger Hill's excellent column elsewhere in this issue.) Imagine three straight days of total immersion in thousands of rare and beautiful books any collector would be thrilled to own.

The committee grading system works extremely well because the final evaluation is a numerical average (mean), and represents the cumulative evaluations of seasoned and experienced collectors and dealers from all regions of the country. I'm a believer in it and an advocate for it. The committee system does an excellent job neutralizing individual and situational bias, and it's fair to both buyer and seller.

Although there were hundreds of sensational and rare lots, I'd like to tell you about the three at the top of my list:

(1) The Lloyd Jacquet Estate "pay copy" of **Marvel #1** impressed me more than I can say. Not only was the general level of preservation among the best I've ever seen, but the information written in pencil in a few places throughout the book is immensely important to the history of comics.

(2) The Bill Gaines **EC File Copies** were so startlingly high grade that at first I thought Jerry Weist must surely be printing fresh copies in the back room. As most collectors will tell you, EC's are regrettably notorious for their usual "well read" condition, yet some of the copies (make that most of the copies) were so flawless that the ink still looked "wet". Evaluating the ink reflectivity of several of the Horror and Sci Fi books was literally "blinding". I don't mind publicly stating that I already envy the lucky collector who becomes the custodian of these museum quality treasures.

3) As far as pure, absolute, rock solid investment goes, one book is the shining star of the auction. You've already probably guessed that it's the wonderfully preserved White Mountain copy of **Amazing Fantasy #15**. I believe that a short decade from now AF 15 (Along with Showcase 4) will rank among the really "Big Books". That's because for a whole generation of Marvel collectors it has become the single most historically important comic. And it's also quite scarce in the higher grades. All this makes the WM AF 15 the investment of choice in my book.

Well enough about the grading committee. I sincerely hope you enjoy this issue. until next time, may you fill the holes on your want list!.

Best,

Gary

Gary M. Carter

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ANT-MAN BEFORE ANT-MAN

Tales To Astonish #27 (Jan 1962) ties with Fantastic Four #2 as the second Marvel hero comic. But it is only a superhero book in retrospect; if Ant-Man had not returned in TTA #35 and gone on to his own series, the Astonish #27 would be just another issue of one of the "pre hero" Marvel fantasy mags. In fact the later pre-hero books are full of precursors and foreshadowings of the coming Marvel age. But Henry Pym, "The Man In The Ant Hill", actually is the person who will return as Ant-Man. This story is more of a nightmare than a heroic origin, as scientist Henry tries out his new shrinking serum on himself, and, underestimating the dosage, ends up insect size… unable to reach the vial of growth serum. What happens after the mini-Pym goes outside falls strictly within the parameters of the monster yarns featured in all four of the late Atlas fantasy titles. The most important detail that would be picked up in the series comes when Pym, after being stalked by a mob of ants and finally cornered, is rescued by a friendly ant, which not only saves his life but also sparks in him the idea of trying to communicate with the insects. And thus, in TTA #35, Pym invents the famous helmet that makes him commanding general of the ant armies. This future is anything but hinted at in TTA #27. In fact, the last panel shows Pym pouring his serums down the drain.

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Along with Tales To Astonish, the other three key (i.e. longest lived) pre-hero fantasy titles were Tales Of Suspense, Strange Tales, and Journey Into Mystery. The latter two had begun back in the pre-code era, when Atlas was king of fantasy. Tales To Astonish and Tales Of Suspense began in 1959, at the beginning of a revival that would cleanly transition from Atlas to Marvel with Fantastic Four #1.

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The other three stories in Tales To Astonish #27 are fair examples of the Atlas "pre-Marvel monster" genre. By 1960 the four fantasy titles had established this format: Kirby/Ayers cover and monster lead, and three back-ups, usually illustrated by Paul Reinman, Don Heck, and Steve Ditko. Although the Ditko stories are often the best of them all, Tales To Astonish #27's "Dead Planet" is an utterly predictable tale of the thwarting of some invincible aliens.

"The Talking Horse" is much better. Maybe Reinman's art is less than glorious, but this story of a very nasty jockey brought down by a very smart nag is most entertaining. The ending circumvents the Comics Code by stopping just before a very violent payoff the jockey is about to receive via his gangster associates. This one really comes close to matching that old pre-code intensity… And "Mirror Mirror on the Wall", with art handled by Heck, is a nice variation on the man-who-married-a-witch plot.

As regards the theme of tiny heroes, it's worth noting the Tales Of Suspense had a "Man In The Bee-Hive" story on the stands at the same time as Tales To Astonish #27. And a

By Pat S. Calhoun

careful perusal of that month's comic rack reveals DC's Showcase #34 (introducing the Atom) was also contending for the dimes of those who liked the idea of itsy-bitsy protagonists. And speaking of dimes, guess what kids? This was the last batch of ten cent comics. Tales To Astonish #28 would set you back twelve cents...

Of course the concept of compressed characters did not originate in late 1961. Atlas, alone, produced a number of diminutive dudes in both their pre and post-code incarnations. Mystic #57 (Mar 1957) leads off with "Trapped In The Ant Hill", definitely a direct link in the Ant-Man's evolution. Again we have a scientist with a serum, and a confrontation inside the ant hill. But no valiant ant saves him this time; the formula wears off, returning him to normal size at the last possible moment.

Also in Mystic #57 (the fifth to the last issue), are some good artists, going through their paces on some lackluster stories. Bill Everett, Joe Orlando, and Robert Q. Sale are among the crowd; these late Atlas books crammed six stories into each issue. In many ways these books are not from the Silver Age, but reflect the malaise that fantasy had suffered ever since the Comics Code Authority made its restrictive presence felt in late 1954.

Atlas phased out most of its titles in the summer of 1957, and their entry into the Silver Age coincides with their 1959 revival. This new fantasy push, rising like a Phoenix from the ashes of the 1957 crash, brought into focus the triumvirate of talent that would spearhead the Marvel age: Stan Lee, Jack Kirby, and Steve Ditko.

Geared to a younger audience, the revamped Atlas was fun and far out, full of colorful concepts and cool aliens, mutants and robots, with a few ghosts and genies thrown in for good measure. The pre-hero Marvels relied heavily on science fiction: this was the Sputnik era and the space race was on! And Ant-Man before Ant-Man in TTA #27 is one of several of the many other Marvel heroes that have their roots in this enjoyable "pre-hero" era. ■

12¢
TALES TO
ASTONISH
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY
36
OCT.
SO!! THE FAMOUS ANT-MAN HAS WALKED INTO THE TRAP OF COMRADE X.!
A GLASS PRISON!! I'VE GOT TO FIND A WAY TO ESCAPE BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE!
featuring: A NEW ANT-MAN THRILLER!

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FACING PAGE, AT LEFT: The famous key issue which introduced fandom to Henry Pym.

FACING PAGE, AT RIGHT: A scarce high grade copy of *TTA* #35, Ant-Man's first cover appearance in costume.

ABOVE: *Tales To Astonish* #36, considered a classic Kirby cover reminiscent of his pre-hero work.

The Comic Book Origin Of Magnus, Robot Fighter!

A hot star for Valiant Publications, Magnus, Robot Fighter would still be one of those great superheroes you never heard of if not for Valiant's revival of the character.

Thirty years ago, Magnus, Robot Fighter was a hit for another new publisher, Gold Key. Nearly every character and concept in the valiant series has its roots in the Gold Key run. Many collectors, this author included, believe that the first 21 issues of the Gold Key run, done by Russ Manning, were some of the best comics ever published. Manning's art was crisp, clean and illustrative. The stories were consistently well plotted and fast paced. A look back at these early issues may aid novice and serious collector alike in their understanding and enjoyment of the new Magnus, Robot Fighter.

In the late 40th Century, 1-A brought Magnus to North Am, the mega city which covered most of North America. Magnus observed that man had become a race of weaklings. People do nothing for themselves. Robots wait on them...build for them, even think for them! He questioned "How did they cause this? They only do what man orders, or do they?"

Magnus, Robot Fighter #1 (Feb 1963) answered this question quickly. Magnus meets his first free-will robot (besides 1-A) in H-8 (pronounced Hate - Hate for Humans). An atomic accident altered H-8's brain circuits and now I am free - above all laws. While free-will robots appeared in several issues of Gold Key's Magnus series. T-1 in Issue #4 (Nov 1963), Talpa in Issue #6 (May 1964), and Kyfar in Issue #15 (Aug. 1966). (Collectors can see these themes continued in Valiant's Steel Nation storyline, issues #1-8, in which millions of free-will robots, who ultimately form their own country, are revealed.) Magnus, Robot Fighter #1 also introduces Leeja Clane, her father Senator Clane, and encounters the 1000 humans H-8 had enslaved to make a human computer.

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Magnus, Robot Fighter #2 (May 1963) introduces Mekman, a robotics genius who idolizes robots and creates identi-robs of Magnus and the government's leaders. To thwart the plot to take over North Am, Magnus must face the robot duplicate of himself. The cover of Issue #2 depicts this battle and has always been a sought after issue.

Magnus, Robot Fighter #3 (Aug 1963) introduces Xyrkol (pronounced Zerkol), a mad genius who creates a giant robot to conquer North Am. Xyrkol was Magnus' most persistent antagonist. With each subsequent appearance, Xyrkol created ever more deadly robots in his attempts to destroy Magnus and conquer North Am.

A key issue in the Gold Key run is **Magnus, Robot Fighter #7 (Aug 1964)** The "Power of 1000" teams Xyrkol with the robot planet Malev-6 (origin & first appearance). Valiant readers will recognize Malev-6 as the antagonist who has conquered North Am, killed most of its citizens and forced Magnus to seek help from Rai and the Future Force.

In "The Power of 1000", Xyrkol creates a robot plague which causes robots to first go berserk and attack humans, then minutes later, fall apart. The plague spreads by contact with other robots. The government attempts to quarantine the area, but the Gophs hide their robots and the plague spreads.

This is the first mention of the Gophs, petty criminals and antisocials ...gopher-like people who never leave the "lowest levels" except to cause trouble. (A minor plot element in the Gold Key series, Valiant's Magnus has rejected the cloud-cloddie ruling class and now lives amongst the Gophs.)

Captured by Xyrkol and teleported to Malev-6, Magnus is tested to learn the secret of his ability to destroy robots. One test brings the first mention of Magnus's Ceramic-Durium, blaster resistant, tunic. Magnus escapes and Malev-6 concludes he is too dangerous to allow to live. "I shall shrivel you to nothingness by the sheer power of my will."

Back on earth, M'ree, one of the 1000 people in H-8's human computer, offers to help Leeja and Magnus if they can gather all 1000 people together. "We have discovered 1000 brains linked together have strange incredible powers." Using Leeja's love of Magnus to search the cosmos, the 1000 locate Magnus in time to fortify his will and psychically strike back at Malev-6. This marked the first appearance of M'ree, the first use of the 1000 and the first mention of Leeja's psychic abilities.

Issue #7 is also the final issue to have a back cover pinup. Beginning with issue #8, Gold Key began to carry advertising on the back cover, as did other publishers of the time.

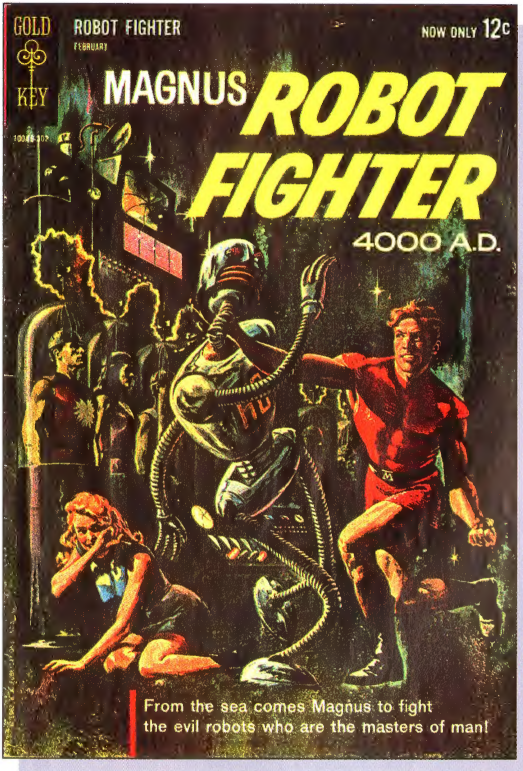
Magnus, Robot Fighter #8 (Nov 1964) introduces The Outsiders, a group of teens attempting to follow Magnus's example and do for themselves, rather than rely on robots (just four months after the Teen Titans made their first appearance in Brave & Bold #54). Issue #13 (Feb 1966) is the first appearance of Dr. Laszlo Noel, a scientist who hates robots and wants them all destroyed. This puts him at odds with Magnus, who simply wants mankind to become less reliant on robots.

By Tony Starks

The letters to the editor page in **Magnus, Robot Fighter #14 (May 66)** is of particular interest to comic historians. In response to a reader's question, Chase Craig, Editor-in-Chief of Gold Key, is credited with originally conceiving Magnus, Robot Fighter. Besides Russ Manning, this is the only creator credit ever given in the Gold Key series. The identity of the writer(s) of Magnus is unknown, though this author suspects that Russ Manning may have been both artist and writer of the series.

In **Magnus, Robot Fighter #18 (May 1967)**, we learn 1-A had done just that. Prior to finding and training Magnus, 1-A had tried with a protoplasm altering machine to create superhumans capable of smashing robots. But the superhumans were all driven insane by the change. 1-A claimed the superhumans all returned to normalcy. In the Valiant series, this was revealed to be a lie and the existence of a group of insane Robot Fighters hidden away by 1-A is an important plot element in the current series.

Issue #18 also ties into the origin of Magnus as revealed in Valiant's Unity crossover. In Unity, we learned that Magnus' parents were Torque and Kris, members of the 20th Century Harbinger team. Magnus was born during the Unity war in a pocket universe Erica created. Solar took baby Magnus to 1-A at the conclusion of the Unity war. When I first read this, I thought the concept was silly. Since reading issue #18, I now appreciate this origin. In the story "Magnus vs. North Am" unscrupulous manufacturers of cheap robots accuse Magnus of being a non-human alien who is plotting the destruction of North Am. Their evidence consists of the fact that (1) there is no record of Magnus' birth on earth or any planet known to earth (because he was not born anywhere or anytime on earth). And (2) no human can destroy robots with his bare hands. (his father Torque could). A neat package!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4000 A.D.
From the sea comes Magnus to fight the evil robots who are the masters of man!

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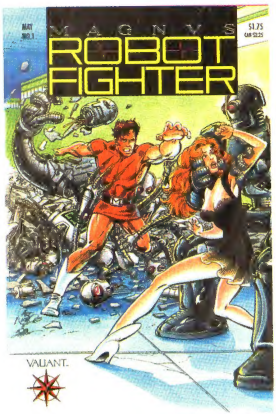
Magnus, Robot Fighter #21 (Feb 1968) was the last new story by Russ Manning and the first mention of ectotheric energy, the stuff of sorcery so important in the current Magnus series.

(continued on next page)



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Human-like robots are created to sabotage the government of North Am, and Magnus must battle a steel replica of himself!

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Magnus, Robot Fighter #22 (May 1968) reprints the first issue and Issues #23-28 are done by other artists, Dan Spiegle receiving credit for Issue #23. These issues are, overall, quite competent, but subsequent artists' work fell short of the mark established by Manning, and the stories seemed to wander. Magnus was no longer a singular man of action, but more a leader and organizer, often using robots to achieve his goals. Magnus' ability to destroy robots with his bare hands became almost incidental to the plotting.

Sales must have suffered as well and the title went reprint with **Magnus, Robot Fighter #29 (Feb 1970).** But the story concepts and character development in the earlier issues will always make the early Magnus a great collectible that Guides for a moderate price.

Besides being beautiful books to own, these Gold Key issues should be great investments and several issues especially stand out. Consider the following short checklist when analyzing the Gold Key Magnus issues. ■

Editor's Note: CBM and Tony Starks would like to thank the Book Broker in Evansville, Indiana for the loan of certain reference issues needed to complete this article.

Tony's Magnus Highlights Checklist

#1 If it had been published by Marvel or D. C., this would be a $1000+ book. Published one month before Spider Man #1, it Guides for $200

#3 First appearance Xyrkol. Guide $95

#4 First appearance T-1. Guide $60

#6 First appearance Talpa. Guide $60

#7 First Malev-6, first Gophs, first use of The 1000, first M'ree and the first time Leeja shows psychic abilities. Guide $60

#18 First mention of 1-A's attempt to create other robot fighters. Guide $40

#21 First use of ectotheric energy by Malev-6. Guide $25

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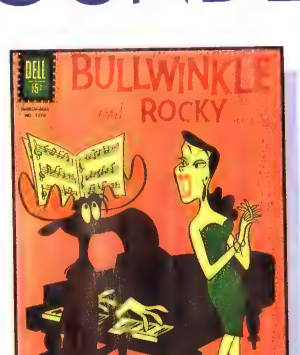
FAN MAIL FROM SOME FLOUNDER?

FOUR COLOR #1270 (BULLWINKLE AND ROCKY #1, MAR-MAY 1962) In "Masked Moose," Bullwinkle anticipates the World Wrestling Federation by about thirty years, while Peabody and Sherman visit Sitting Bull.



© Jay Ward Prod.

I WAS A HIGHLY IMPRESSIONABLE 8-YEAR-OLD WHEN MY FAMILY VISITED the 1962 Seattle World's Fair and then drove south to take me to the home of Rocky and Bullwinkle. No, not Frostbite Falls — the Jay Ward Productions studio was an unprepossessing Swiss chalet which sat at the head of the fabled Sunset Strip in Hollywood, at 8218 Sunset Boulevard. Today the once-busy cottage is empty, and, occupying prime real estate as it is, probably won't be there much longer.

The statue in the tiny forecourt is legendary… a 12-foot plaster effigy of Bullwinkle holding Rocky aloft. It was built in 1962 as a parody of the Vegas-showgirl billboard which stood directly across the street in front of the Chateau Marmont hotel, and which gained fame as the dustjacket icon for Gore Vidal's novel, Myra Breckinridge. Today the "moose and squirrel" statue remains a favorite discovery of cartoon fans and ranks among the most photographed landmarks in Southern California.

I'd corresponded with the Ward studio since 1959, the year Rocky and His Friends began on after-school television on ABC. The Bullwinkle Show made its debut on NBC's Sunday evening schedule two years later, in September 1961, with an outlandish spasm of publicity that included a special parody section in TV Guide. Ward was a whiz at public relations and his stunts remain the stuff of Hollywood legend. For the show's premiere he enlisted Jayne Mansfield to perform a ribbon-cutting ceremony that backed up traffic for blocks. Joke handprints and footprints of the show's writers, artists, and directors still line the courtyard's sidewalk.

Ward maintained a prodigious mailing list and inundated the Bullwinkle faithful with reams of paper ephemera. I wish I'd held onto such relics of early sixties satire as the JFK Administration Song Sheet and the Bullwinkle Pledge, which must have alarmed parents with its caveat, "I promise to poke my eyes out with a sharp stick if ever caught watching Maverick or Lassie"- the two programs, naturally, on opposite Bullwinkle.

I circulated dozens of "Statehood for Moosylvania" petitions and memorized details from biographies of the cast; it seems Bullwinkle himself had attended M.I.T.—the Moose Institute of Toe-Dancing. There was an endless flow of black and white 8X10 glossies of the characters that continued all the way through such later Ward programs as "Fractured Flickers", "George of the Jungle", and "Hoppity Hooper".

The Rocky and Bullwinkle comic book run began in 1959, with Rocky and His Friends in Dell's Four Color #1128. It continued with seven issues through 1962, including Bullwinkle and Rocky #1 in Four Color #1270. There were also March of Comics #216, #223, and 233 and Bullwinkle #01-090-209. These initial Dells hold up today; it's a satirical series that captures much of the TV show's notorious wit. You can almost hear the calliope music of the show's original circus-parade opening as you turn the pages. Along with Boris Badenov and Natasha Fatale, who've always been strong enough villains to have fans of their own, we encounter Cloyd and Gidney, the moon men, in stories such as

"Magnetic Moose" and "The Moosterious Journey".

But the anarchy began in earnest in October 1962, when an 80 page giant, Rocky and His Fiendish Friends, was released as the first R&B book to bear the Gold Key imprint. Here the savage spirit of the show was captured on the comic book page. The stentorian narration by William Conrad was duplicated, as well as the "breaking of the fourth wall"—all characters routinely "talked back" to the narrator, to the comic's writers and artists, and to the readers themselves

The Cold War political satire and the corrupt senators, blowhards, con men, and ne'er-do-wells who populated the TV show were never fully replicated in the comics. Gold Key undoubtedly felt that adults were less likely to come across the comic books. But plenty of oxen were gored nonetheless: unethical doctors, Russian cosmonauts, temperamental actors, and Arabian oil sheiks were lampooned in the first two issues of Rocky and His Fiendish Friends, the undisputed high points of the R&B comics cycle

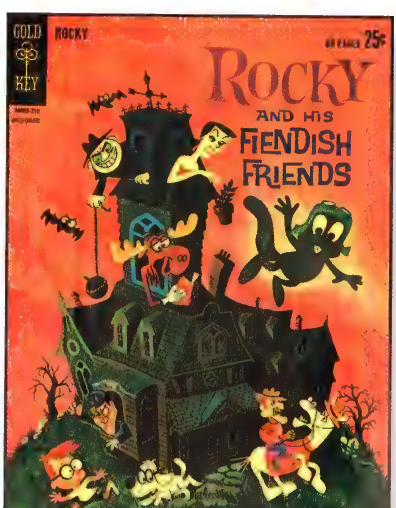
The first of these 25-cent gems took our boys behind a literal Iron Curtain into forbidden Pottsylvania. It was given to me as one of the freebies I collected on my tour of the Ward studio; my only fear was that I wasn't going to be able to find succeeding issues of this new series when I returned home to Michigan. I needn't have worried, Issue #2, a movie special set in Hollywood, was even funnier, although the sports theme of #3 wasn't exactly my cup of tea. Then with #4 both the giant size and the rude wit were gone, replaced by shorter, more mundane adventures. The series ended an issue later.

The Rocky and Bullwinkle comics always showcased the entire cast in the variety-show format borrowed from television. Peabody's Improbable History and Fractured Fairy Tales were carry-overs from the "Rocky and His Friends" program; Dudley Do-Right and Aesop & Son began with "The Bullwinkle Show". One-pagers were largely devoted to R&B gags. There was even a one shot special, Mother Moose's Nursery Pomes (#01-530 207), an admirable recreation of the literary lunacy of "Bullwinkle's Corner". Another Ward-derived one-shot, Fractured Fairy Tales, did not feature Rocky or Bullwinkle.

By late 1963, the fun was mostly over. A 32-page title, Bullwinkle, had begun nearly concurrently with Fiendish Friends; the first issue was dated November 1962. It made a halfhearted stab at capturing the TV madness, but suffered from comparatively lackluster stories and art. The series limped along until #11 in April 1974. About subsequent brief runs by Charlton and Marvel, the less said the better.

Today Billie Ward, Jay's widow, continues to operate the Dudley Do-Right Emporium, half a block from the shuttered studio at 8200 Sunset Boulevard, Hollywood, California 90046. It remains an unbeatable mail order source for R&B collectibles, including T-shirts, wrist watches, hand-painted animation cels, and copies of original scripts. Do Mrs. Ward a favor and send a stamped, self-addressed business sized envelope when requesting a catalog.

With a grand total of 28 Silver Age appearances, Rocky and Bullwinkle is a manageable run to accumulate. It's steep but affordable, particularly in less than mint condition. In fine it currently guides for $724, compared with $1,710 in near mint. Given the moose and squirrel's continuing cultural presence, this run can only appreciate in the coming years. And besides, it offers a good read to those of us with nothing up our sleeves and a lasting fondness for "eenie meenie chili beanie." ■



© Jay Ward Prod.

ROCKY AND HIS FIENDISH FRIENDS #1 (OCT 1962). The first 80-page R&B, drawn by an anonymous "good moose artist." The Pottsylvania story continues episodically throughout the issue, just like on TV.

GIVEN THE MOOSE AND SQUIRREL'S CULTURAL PRESENCE, THIS RUN CAN ONLY APPRECIATE IN THE COMING YEARS

Quesada

OVERSTREET'S COMIC BOOK MARKETPLACE INTERVIEWS

X-TRAORDINARY X-FACTOR ARTIST

JOE QUESADA

Where were you born Joe?

I was born and raised in New York.

What was your first published work?

My first published work in comic books was some coloring work for Valiant. It was done piece-meal in their studios. The first printed penciling work was a pin-up I did for Valiant for one of their Nintendo magazines. It was a pin-up called "Video Town".

Actually, I think I did a bunch of "What the?!" pieces for Marvel. To date, I think, only one or two have been printed.

After that I went on to DC. That would have been three years ago. I've only been in the business for about three years. The truth of the matter is that I think my DC work might have been printed before my Marvel work. Yes… the DC stuff came first.

The Marvel stuff was in between all this. At DC I did a book called *Spelljammer* for them, I did some *Question Quarterlys* — I believe two of them — *The Ray* mini series for DC, and an issue of *SleepWalker* for Marvel, an *X-Factor* Annual (my first X-Factor work) for Marvel, numerous covers, assorted Azrael, *Legends of the Dark Knight* Annual and assorted trading cards.

What kinds of trading cards did you do?

I think my first trading cards were Impact trading cards for DC, then I think it's pretty much been X-Factor and whatever I do from this point on. Since then I've done trading cards for X-Factor, trading cards for The Ray, a trading card for Jim Lee's Wild Cats, one Jurassic Park trading card, and one Star Wars card.

Of the work you've done to date, which character did you feel was the greatest challenge?

They are all challenging, just in different ways. I think the one that I had the most fun doing at the time was The Ray, followed very closely by Azrael. I had a chance to create the look for those characters. I found it a challenge, I guess, just to give my own interpretation of my own design. The Ray I was very happy with because of the simplicity of it. Azrael was a completely different thing. It was a much more complex design — at least by The Ray's standards.

What's your earliest memory of comic books?

That would have to be going into the local candy store in my neighborhood which was owned by a very good friend of my father's. He used to get comic books. He didn't have a rack. He just had one shelf that he just threw them all in — assorted titles, assorted companies, it didn't really matter. I remember picking those up, and I remember picking up the Jack Kirby stuff and being just knocked out! I'm talking about his Fantastic Four stuff. That would have been sometime in the mid to late 60s, obviously. I remember seeing Kirby and being impressed. I then started collecting comics later on. Around the age of 8 or 10, or so — around there. I remember getting the Kirby Fourth World stuff in the early seventies. I collected only for a few years and then moved on from there, once I discovered girls. That's when I stopped collecting comics for awhile. I'm sorry to say that I missed the whole Neil Adams period. I really wasn't re-introduced into comics until Frank Miller's Dark Knight. That's when I came back.

Frank Miller's work helped you decide to come back to comics?

Yes. It was all by happenstance. I was working a bunch of "meaningless" retail jobs, meaningless to me anyway. Essentially someone told me that I should check out what's happening in comics because he knew I was "artistically inclined". Then he returned the next day, and said, "Here, why don't you check this out?" I just figured, "Ah, comic books, I remember them from when I was a kid and it just doesn't interest me."

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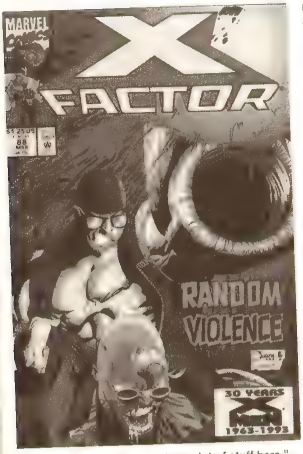


X-Factor #88, with it's stylistic design and character placement.

I read Miller's Dark Knight and I was completely floored. I was thinking, "Is this what comic books have become?" At that point I thought "Jeez, if this is what comics have become, I missed out on a lot of stuff here."

So, the next day I went back to the same comic book shop where my friend bought the Miller book and by complete and total chance, the next book I picked out was issue #2 of *The Watchmen*. Those were the first two comic books that I read. I went back and, of course, I got issue #1 of *The Watchmen*, and started collecting that title. Then I picked up a whole slew of Marvel and DC stuff, and realized that these two books were quite exceptional compared to most. As far as Frank Miller and Watchmen were concerned, it was the story telling and the graphics involved. I mean, it wasn't just the same old face put on the same old muscular body. It was real literary characterization… it was emotion… it was passion… it was violence… it was everything! You know, it was a movie. It was a much more sophisticated medium than I remember reading as a child.

Were there any other artists or writers that you point to as sources of inspiration?

Yes. All my inspirations came from that point on. I went out and started collecting a lot of stuff, and started really looking at stuff. I looked at some of the older "masters" like Alex Raymond, Alex Toth, Hal Foster — all these guys were incredible.

Then I started looking at some of the new Adams stuff, and, of course, Bill Sienkiewicz and those guys. Then came Mike Mignola and David Mazzucchelli which was a natural step, I guess, after looking at Raymond and Toth. I always considered that the three "Ms" were my biggest influence — Miller, David Mazzucchelli, and Mike Mignola.

As far as writers are concerned, I picked up anything that had the Alan Moore name on it or the Frank Miller name on it. I thought that they were just cream of the crop. The whole Miracle Man series by Alan Moore and "V" For Vendetta just blew me away.

What's it like when you attend comic book conventions?

It's just one never-ending party. I love having a good time with fans. It's a lot of fun. At the end of the day it turns out to be a lot more draining than I thought. By evening I'm pretty much wiped out, but I really enjoy the convention experience. I enjoy meeting with comic fans, talking to them, answering questions when I can… even teasing them a little by sometimes not giving them the specific answer they are looking for. Especially when they ask about future plot developments. Sometimes I like them to be surprised.

For instance a common question might be "What's going to happen to this character", and "Who is Azrael really?"

I sometimes say "Wait and read the book. It's that whole "Time/Life Books" thing, you know — "read the book".

It sounds like you really enjoy your fans.

That's nice to hear and it's true. As far as I'm concerned, those guys pay my rent — the nine year olds and everybody else who reads these books. They are the folks that I'm doing these books for. I want to make it accessible, enjoyable, entertaining and if they are getting pleasure out if it, well, gee, that makes me really happy.

If they tell me so at a convention or if they are asking me to sign their books, well, by all means, I'm happy to do it. At that point I am at their service. When fans write in letters, I try to get all my mail at Marvel and DC whether it's directed strictly at me or whether it's just general mail that's coming in about a book that I'm working on.

I try to read

"It's just one never-ending party."

JOE QUESADA

"YOU NEED TO READ THE MAIL TO FIND OUT IF IT WAS A GOOD COMIC..."

everything I can. I can't write back to everybody of course, but I do enjoy and take to heart what they write. I think it's important to find out what the audience's feedback is on my stuff.

At this point, I get one or two letters a week that are coming directly to me. I try to write back if I can. A lot of people ask for a lot of sketches and stuff, and that's almost impossible to do. But I do enjoy the mail...

If some of our readers wanted to write, where would they send a letter?

If they care to, anyone can write to me in care of Marvel, DC, or Valiant. I'll get it one way or another. Along with my work as a comic book artist, I'm also a musician. I've performed for years. Unlike music in the comic art field there is no crowd clapping and shouting bravo and encore when you finish a page, so you need to read the mail to really find out whether it was a good comic book or a bad comic book... and what the readers enjoyed and what they didn't. I am very serious about the consensus of suggestions and try to do more of stuff readers like if I can.

Do you ever write scripts?

No. I haven't really written anything.

What writers do you enjoy working with?

I've been really lucky. So far I've had nothing but the best writers in the industry to work with. I've worked with Peter David, Denny O'Neil, Jack Harris on Tom Kay, Fabian Nicieza, Scott Lobdell.

Again, I've only been in the business three years, but in those three years I've had nothing but quality writers. I can honestly say that I've enjoyed working with. Each one of them does a completely different thing. As far as that variety is concerned, I've just found every single one of them a joy to work with.

I wonder if you could share with CBM readers a little bit about the process of making a script "come to life" with pictures.

Sure. Well, it depends on the writer. Let's take two very examples for comparison — Denny O'Neil and Peter David.

Denny O'Neil's writing style consists of breaking down the story, not only page by page, but he will break his plots (full stories) down into a panel-by-panel description. And he actually does the finished dialogues. Denny is really screen writing the whole thing, and telling me exactly what each character is saying every step of the way. I pretty much attempt to have the character emote the exact things Denny is trying to get across on that page. He really does break it down too. For example he'll say "This shot is from Batman's point of view," or "This shot is from Azrael's point of view" and specifically describe what the characters are doing.

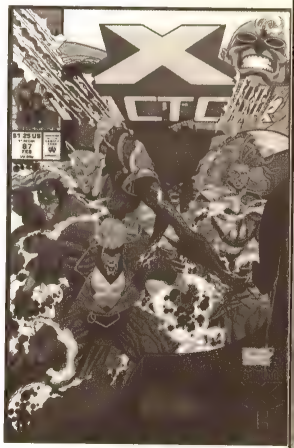
To some extent, that makes life easier. To another extent, it limits the artist a little bit because Denny will write it into a (let's say) seven panel sequence. I, in turn, may feel like this might work better as a five panel sequence. We discuss it and then we may rearrange the dialogue balloons some. I'll sometimes try to break something down into fewer panels or even make more panels... all to try to make Denny's dialogues better integrated with the actions that are being illustrated.

In contrast is the way Peter David works a script. He writes more in the "Marvel" style. Peter will write (let's say) a paragraph for each page or a paragraph describing two pages with assorted bits of dialogue. At that point I take his description of the action, break it down into a number of panels that I feel will be appropriate rhythmically and movement wise, and put in the key panels that he needs for certain specific dialogue. If there's a panel where Havoc has to say, "You're dead", I have to make sure that somewhere along that sequence of panels (that I've constructed) that there is a place where Havoc can say his line appropriately.

So, it's two quite different methods and you can see that there are pros and cons for the artist and the writer with each approach.

What are some of those pros and cons?

Famous cover to X-Factor #87, in which artwork nearly covers logo.



© Marvel

Well, the "pros" include the artistic freedom. I

© Marvel

pretty much get to play director and actor for the whole thing. The "cons" are that there is a lot of intensive thinking required. There's a lot of timing and pacing that you have to watch out for, especially with Peter's stuff. It's because his dialogue is so good. Although I've found that the more I worked with Peter, the more I discovered that I was actually working too hard. That's because Peter is so talented that I could have literally drawn the back of people's heads saying his dialogues and it would have worked.

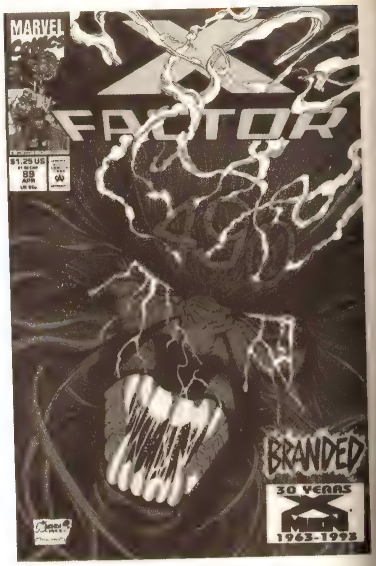
Most comic book fans are probably unaware of your "dual identity" as a professional musician.

I'm a guitar player and I'm a song writer. I've played in the New York rock and roll club circuit for many years. This is a story I've never really told so it's funny you should ask about it during a comic book interview. Actually being a musician is one of the ways that I got involved with Valiant comics. I've always had some success in music but never really the major success that every original song writing band looks for. I met Steve Massarsky who at the time happened to be a pretty prominent lawyer in the music industry. He was one of the founding members of Valiant. Steve heard my tape and took quite a liking to it. Steve has represented acts like the Allman Brothers, Aerosmith, and others. I spent more time in my life as a musician than actually doing comic books. I probably do music better too.

Some have suggested that the comic book industry is in the middle of a revolution of sorts. What's your view?

Nobody really knows where that revolution is going. And I'm not sure I'm really qualified to sit here and predict where everything is going, but I think I have a sense that this industry is kind of swirling out of control right now. I've been getting calls from people who are starting their own comic book companies and doing their own trading card sets. Things are really in a major, major, major upheaval. Marvel is losing percentage points, but they are making more dollars. Image and Valiant are doing wonderfully well, although I've heard that image, like every company, has a share of problems sometimes.

"Being a musician is one of the ways I got involved with Valiant Comics."



X-Factor #89, Joe Quesada at his best.

It's a very weird thing. I think that the bottom line is that this business is going to have to try to weed out the speculators. If not, we're going to end up in the same situation as some of the trading card companies, and it may actually happen faster for us because now the trading card speculators know exactly what they are looking for in comic books.

I also think, in a sense, there are companies out there that are trying to do the right thing. I can cite Valiant as a prime example of a company who realizes that the only way to really reach the mass market (by mass market I mean people who have never read comic books) is to make these comic books **readable**. We've got to start telling stories again. We have to get into characterization — essentially the same things that I found in Frank Miller's Dark Knight and in Watchmen. If we can do that, and really start making them into good old fashioned soap operas, I think we can bring some people into this industry. We can bring in more fans instead of people who just want to bag these books and throw them in an attic somewhere. That's important to me. I'd rather see a kid with my comic book rolled up and torn in his back pocket than coming up to me with 10 of them bagged in plastic

© Marvel

Acclaimed cover to X-Factor #87, "Can't go around him..."

asking for signatures so they might be worth more twenty years from now.

What's your ideal fantasy for the future of comics?

I would like to see this industry get the credit it deserves. I think there are people in this business who are magnificent story tellers, who could very easily do something in Hollywood, who could very easily create viable products. I think we've been, pardon the expression, "shat" upon for too long. It's looked down on as a kid's medium, and I think that I would like to see it become a little more serious, and I would like to see more people across the country, who have never read comic books, pick one up for the first time.

I'd like to see more women reading comic books. I'd like to see more comic books written for women. That's where I'd really like to see this industry head.

Also sales seem low to me. I hear people get excited and yell "Oh, my God, that comic book sold a million copies! What a miraculous thing". But, when you talk about other forms of entertainment, and other entertainment fields, a million is really small numbers when you come down to it.

I think that there is so much room for us to grow. How big is comic book fandom? — somebody said it was 500,000 or something like that. Even at double or triple that figure, that's an unbelievably small population and that just tells me there is still a vast untapped market. But where is it? It's got to be out there somewhere and I'd like to see us tap into it.

For myself, my own personal goals, where I'd like to see myself in the future?

I know I'd like to have as long a career as guys like Miller, and Simonson, and Byrne, and people like that. I'd like to have that kind of future in this business. The goal that I aspire to, is to do a book some day that is good enough to be used as a way to introduce new readers to the medium... I would like to, some day, do a book of the caliber that someone might hold it up as a standard for the industry. I'd also like to, some day, create a character that holds up for many years. Those are lofty ideals. We'll see what happens. I like to keep my goals high as I can.

One last question Joe. Is there any special scoop or inside tip you could give our readers — something they could look forward to?

There are a couple of little scoops. One is to start getting Azraels because those books are going to be escalating in interest. If you've never read it, you should because he could be very important in Batman continuity. The other thing is that I am going to be doing some design work which will be very, very, very important to Batman #500 The Anniversary. I'm going to design a new Batman Costume.

Also Bloodshot #6 from Valiant is a very important issue, and contains an introduction of a new character there that is going to be very significant in Valiant's universe.

Thanks for sharing your time with CBM readers, Joe

It was fun Gary, let's do it again sometime. ■

"Start getting Azraels because those books are going to be escalating in interest."

Cash Paid For Historic "Ashcans!"

Do you have an unidentifiable comic with an odd black & white cover and color interior?

It may be an historic "ashcan!"

In the early days of comic book publishing, there was a never-ending battle between highly competitive businessmen to lay claim to every conceivable comic book title. In order to properly register the title with the copyright office in Washington DC, publication of the book was required.

In the heat of competition, crafty comic book publishers developed a system to fool the government into believing that the book had been produced. They produced "ashcan" comics! These "imposters" existed only for legal registration and were never sold.

"Ashcans" usually had black and white covers (often Velox prints) stapled to color interiors from previously printed comics.

One "ashcan" comic was rushed to the copyright office in Washington DC to register the title and logo art. Another was placed in the publisher's files. Often extra "ashcans" were made and given to editors and other employees as souvenirs. Sometimes these rarities surface in today's comics collector marketplace.

Recently signed and numbered limited edition "ashcans" have appeared on the collectors market. Though highly desirable, these modern-day collectibles are not traditional "ashcan" editions.

Genuine historical "ashcans" are by definition among the rarest of comic books.

If you aren't sure that the book you have is an "ashcan" or not — please call me toll-free at **800-344-6060**. I'll help you identify your book and gladly make an offer.

Gary Colabuono

Moondog's

1201 Oakton St.
Elk Grove Village, IL 60007

(800) 344-6060

BLACK APRIL? MAYBE...MAYBE NOT

by Todd McDevitt

This article is intended for the 2nd issue of *Overstreet's Comic Book Marketplace* which is scheduled for release the first of May 1993. That is assuming you (and your local comic shop) had enough money left over to buy this issue after the mountains of new products hit the shelves in April.

I am in a uniquely odd position. I'm exploring what will happen to the comic book industry in April before it starts, deadlines being deadlines, and it will be in print just after it's over. But it's only over on the calendar. The best time to examine something is when it's complete. For now, I toss around hypotheses. We'll still be in the middle of it, the point of no return, when this hits the stands.

It started with the publishers. One major publisher announces a big event for April, so another needs to counter it with something just as big and the whole thing snowballs. Publishers compete for shelf space more vigorously than for money in your pocket, because that space is where you spend that money. *Superman* could be one title and ship weekly, but it would only take up one space on the racks. ***As a retailer, I hate this. I'm running out of room!*** I've left the *Supergirl/Team Luthor* special on my new shelf for weeks now because I don't/can't make space for it. Before April hits, I plan to rearrange my stores slightly to make room for the explosion of new titles. All I'll be doing is extending the boundaries of the battlefield where the publishers will go to war.

In economics, there's a rule called the **Law Of Marginal Utility**. I still keep in touch with the professor who taught it to me and we frequently discuss the comic business and how unique it is. Many business standards aren't suited for this industry, but this is one none can escape. The **LOMU** goes something like this: Say you are dying for a pizza. You buy a 16-cut with your favorite toppings. Non-stop, you devour 13 slices. Do you want that 14th piece as badly as you wanted the previous 13? Most do not. There are other small factors which influence different phases of the LOMU, e.g. what if you can't afford all the pizza toppings you want (prestige format instead of newsstand). But that's the line dividing Economics 101 and 102, and I was lucky to pass either.

The direct market retail level in March of 1992 totaled 14 million. March of 1993 broke all records to become the biggest yet at 29 million. As I write this before the fact, the lowest estimate for April is 46 million. So far, consumers can't seem to get enough of the comics we sell. Publishers make more. Retailers carry more. Fans buy more. Obviously, this has been great for everyone. But we've got to remember that eventually, we're going to get to that 14th piece of pizza! When we do, somebody's going to have to eat the leftovers...

With the tremendous bulk of new product shipping in April, we will find out just how big the comic market is. Predictions of doom have circulated before, but the readers just kept on buying what was thrown at them. From that angle, maybe the comic market is more expansive than we realize after all. A saturated market would only be truly saturated with all the devices efficiently operating.

I think some of the reasons business theories don't translate well in comics business is that publishers are without focus. DC for instance... Do we really need another Justice League title? Distributors seem slow... Why can't I have my books delivered twice a week? And I've met some retailers who appear almost completely clueless... Do they know what a cycle sheet is?

Despite all the things this business has against it, everyone still makes money. When the mechanics of efficiency and service are in place, the accuracy of all levels of this industry will evolve. Look around you. April may be the trigger to push this metamorphosis into motion.

If April turns out to be a bad thing, it will actually be a good thing. Some comic stores will be out of business. The bales and bales of comics will pile up through April with more stuff coming out every week. Plus by April's end, retailers will already have their orders placed for June. They may just get buried deeper and deeper.

The type of shop owner I'm referring to is the one who doesn't use cycle sheets or some other standardized method of ordering. He will either go under or learn how to operate effectively. Whichever happens, the industry as a whole benefits.

Another point I scored on my Economics final was defining the final consumer. He is "the person who ultimately consumes goods for his individual satisfaction". This is one of those rules that doesn't work in comics. Since retailers buy books on a non-returnable basis from wholesalers, **the retailers are essentially the final consumer!**

This means that the retail community sends a distorted message to distributors and publishers. A great example is *X-men* #1. At the time it was issued, it broke the record for the best selling comic of all time. So now it sounds like eight million people bought *X-men* #1 right?

Wrong!

Over eight million copies were ordered by retailers. I know store owners who are still sitting on sealed cases of the thing. How can the publishers know that? In the case of *X-men* #1, Marvel probably found out through retailer complaints. But they didn't discover how many were over-ordered. And what about the "scrub" titles that we end up with a

I can remember ordering books last summer and how I thought there was tons of stuff being released then. The most important thing to remember about April is that it's April. This isn't supposed to be a big comic month! June and July are supposed to be. I didn't think my May orders were too overwhelming, but I feel like it's the calm before the storm. Marvel plans to release **147 titles** in June. Unless April's releases are an oddity, the core summer months will kill even more trees. This will either be a deadly blow or

CBM FORUM

few leftover? A few extra unsold copies per direct market store would work out to about 15,000 books. That's the entire print run of some titles!

With many retail stores possibly shutting down, what happens to distributors? Most shops have some kind of credit terms with their distributors. If Black April overwhelms them, they may not be able to pay the bills. Once bitten... twice shy distributors will soon toughen their terms and provide more retailer support programs to foster lasting reliable accounts. I think once again the industry as a whole benefits in the long run.

Unfortunately, publishers are somewhat immune to a **Black April**. The lag involved from a publishing stage to a spot on the rack is enough to give them time to judge what to do next. If the 8th Spider-Man title doesn't sell, Marvel won't make a 9th.

I've talked with some people whom I consider to be good retailers that order accurately and they are scared. Joe Hefferman of Collector's Comic Shop in New Jersey told me that he will have to sell more new comics alone in April than he did last Christmas with his entire product line. Rationally this isn't possible, but this is the comic business. His view seemed to be that although he may not sell all of April's releases in April, many of the big titles have an enduring shelf life that will keep them selling into the summer. Books like *Reign of the Supermen, Turok, Maximum Carnage, Infinity Crusade,* and *X-men Unlimited* should all be sought after for several months. I sure hope so. Christmas in April doesn't sound like it's going to happen.

The day comic historians will pinpoint the darkest day of a Black April will be the 28th. Everything will build up to that day when an avalanche of new product is released. My orders for six of the titles that are scheduled to ship that week account for my average total weekly box count and a bill that will be a third higher than average. And that's for only six titles! There's lots more stuff that I'll get on top of that. Gary Colabuono of the Moondog's chain in Chicago tells me that 18.5% of his April orders is the Superman storyline. According to other research, that's low. The industry average is about 25%. Does the phrase, eggs in one basket, come to mind?

"Superman #75... became the best selling book in history. But more importantly, it became the most circulated comic in history."

If the events in the "Reign of the Supermen" story line are successful in attracting media attention, this may be the buffer needed to prevent Black April. Last issue I touched on how beneficial and powerful the general public can be. It was their interest in Superman that made it break records. The previous record holder was *X-men #1* (I've already suggested they sold well only to retailers using cases of them as furniture). Plus the copies that did sell typically went five to one customer (who, of course, must have them all to complete his collection). On the other hand, *Superman #75* was typically limited to one per customer. With this restraint and retailers actually "selling through" (selling out) on this comic, it became the best selling book in history. But more importantly, it became **the most circulated comic in history**.

This staggering accomplishment was possible because the general public demanded it. Based on the minimum print run DC is planning for *Adventures* of *Superman* #500 (collectors edition), approximately 20% of the people who latched onto the death hype will need to come back for this chapter in the story to make it a sell-out. That's about the same number as the estimated number of casual comic readers there are in the entire United States.

According to Dave Sim, the media won't bite on this Superman story. He called his death a genuine media hook and April's events just another comic book story. The news media isn't going to jump every time something earth-shattering (Kryton shattering?) occurs in the pages of *Superman*. Almost by definition, a comic is supposed to be earth-shattering. How can an expected standard become news?

Dave Sim compared Superman's death to the Elvis stamp. He's Canadian and has no tremendous love for the King, but admits that he would have picked up some stamps after seeing the media blitz. The same frenzy fueled *Superman #75*. Lacking that catalyst, the Reign of the Supermen may truly be the death of the Man of Steel. If Superman represents 25% of April... and bombs... I predict it may be enough to "bury" a good many retailers.

With Superman leading the charge of the heaps of product arriving in April, something in this business "is going to change". If all of this stuff manages to sell through, comics will make another giant, but possibly premature leap forward. If retailers get stuck with merchandise they bought as final consumers, they will have to get smarter or they may have to find another line of work. Maybe there is a happy medium between these two scenarios that will leave the comic business unchanged.

Maybe...maybe not. ■

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WonderCon

The Seventh Annual Wonder Con (billed as the Crossroads of Popular Culture) was held on April 2-4, 1993 at the Parc International Hotel in Oakland, California.

The three day affair drew record crowds of over 7000 according to Con coordinator Joe Field. Over 125 dealers, 30 exhibitors and more than 150 artists filled the 50,000 square foot convention center.

The Image creators signed autographs for over 4500 fans in an ultra-orderly and well-planned designated area that was convenient for fans, dealers and exhibitors alike.

Also in attendance were Golden Age greats such as Will Eisner, Creig Flessel, Fred Rhoads, Shelly Moldoff and Mart Nodell.

The Literacy Volunteers of America (California Chapter) held their annual art auction to benefit and support their goals of teaching adults and teens to read via trained volunteer tutors. According to John Staub, an LVA spokesman, the auction raised a record $8,165.00 thanks to the generosity of the donations of over 100 different pieces of artwork by the attending artists, including great pieces from Don Rosa, Dan Berry and Jim Lee.

The Wonder Con was preceded by a two day "Pro-Con" assembly attended by over 200 comic book industry professionals.

Convention goers and dealers alike reported one of the most successful and well-attended comic book conventions in recent memory.

Michael A. Naiman

UPPER LEFT: Spawn meets the fans.

UPPER RIGHT: Chris Pedrin and friend show off their Golden Age treasures.

LOWER LEFT: Rob Liefeld & Todd McFarlane signing comics for thousands of fans.

LOWER RIGHT: The WonderLine!

BY MICHAEL NAIMAN

WonderCon: Dateline: April 11, 1993... one week after WonderCon — the second largest annual comic book convention held in California.

WonderCon — three long days of a never-ending sea of faces, each one hoping to find a personal treasure.

WonderCon — where I've never seen so many DC collectors in one place (I wish I could help you folks, but DCs are hard to find, especially high grades... my hat's off to you in your quests).

WonderCon — where Valiant was hot, and Marvel's 70's books were hotter.

WonderCon's WonderLine — a three day, non-stop waiting line for your chance at the Image Crew's signatures.

thank all of you, because you reminded us why we got into this business — the joy of reading and collecting comic books. The people who came to the show all three days (and there were a lot of them) especially engaged in casual conversations, a true sign they felt unhurried and that they wanted to also enjoy the show.

I personally enjoyed my time spent with Scott, a 12 year old, who spent over and hour going slowly through the Amazing Spider-Man box. Every five or six books, he would pull one out and describe the actions inside of that issue and ask me "What if" questions. His enthusiasm made me smile a lot, and I could remember when I was like him. Thanks Scott.

Of course there were lots

"Ticket holders 3,600 to 3,700 can now go to the Image table for autographs."

"Ticket holders 3,600 to 3,700 can now go to the Image table for autographs."

Three days of standing on your feet may seem like a long time, but we had a good time mainly due to the collectors that stopped by our tables. We would like to

of buyers, but surprisingly there were also a lot of collectors wishing to sell and sell good stuff. They weren't interested in trading, or buying anything afterwards, they just wanted to exchange their books for hard cash. Could this be a sign of the times? Or perhaps timing?

My one criticism of WonderCon is that they chose a weekend only a couple a weeks ahead of the dreaded April 15th tax deadline. I wonder how many people held their money back because they're not sure what their tax situation will turn out to be.

At last year's WonderCon, there were a lot of "big" book buyers (willing to spend over $100 per book). This year, we only had one book that broke that mark. Most books sold in the $5 to $25 range. A lot of people also wanted to trade books... mostly recent books like Valiant for Silver-Age stuff. I think that's smart, and good luck finding a dealer who will do it.

What Was Hot At WonderCon: Wolverine & Silver Surfer are still in demand. 1970's books that also saw lots of action included: The Avengers, Dr. Strange, The Invaders, Son of Satan, Tomb of Dracula, and various "Giant-Sizes" (often a over-looked addition to anyone's collection). Iron Fist #14 in NM sold for $90, the buyer smiling and not once quibbling at the price. Uncanny X-Men #94 in VF sold for $110. Wolverine #1 NM for $25. And a beat-up, yet entirely intact Avengers #1 (FR+) sold quickly at $50 to an Avengers collector who said,

"I just want it to say I have it... I could never afford one in a better condition."

What's Cooling Down at WonderCon: Ghost Rider, both old and new alike, and Punisher. We've had a Spider-Man #129 VF/NM price at $250 for over six months without even a nibble. Uncanny X-Men of the early eighties also seem slow at anything more than 70% of guide pricing.

Before I go, I would like to thank Dolly and Andrew, my co-workers at the Silver Age Gems booth. Without their help, I would probably be dead now. And also my thanks to the many friends who stopped by to say hello, like Dave, Brian, Paul, and especially Dan—who had to show me his personal treasure encased in a Fortress Protector, Spider-Man #129 NM. I would also like to thank the staff of WonderCon for putting on one the great Comic Book Conventions year after year. You guys really deserve a round of applause!

And finally, as Tony Starks wrote in CBM last issue, the return on your investment in a comic book is primarily the pleasure received from reading it... any increase in value is just a bonus. How true. So until next time, enjoy collecting and I hope to see you at next years **WonderCon!** ■

WonderCon Market Report
Steve Leedom
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As I came out of the subway, I noticed a street vendor in front of the World Trade Center unpacking boxes of Adventures of Superman #500.

"$3.00 today! $5.00 tomorrow!" he shouted as he stacked handfuls of the white plastic-covered comics for all to see. Get them while you can! These books are hot off the presses.

"They're probably hot in other ways too", a pedestrian muttered. Whether the books came from the Goodfellas Trucking and Distribution Co. or not, here I was in the financial heart of the world, and there sure was a lot of business going down on the street.

After watching the book monger add copies of the *Amy Fisher/Joey Buttafuco* and *The Maxx* next to the *Supermans* I crossed the Great White Way and headed onto Maiden Lane to one of my favorite hang outs, Chameleon Comics & Cards. The employees were busy setting up for the traffic that they were anticipating.

When *Superman* #75 came out, so many kids cut school and their parents took time off of work, that the store had a line that went out the door and around the corner. The mix of people ranged from Wall Street junk bond salesmen through artistic types in their de rigueur black, kind-hearted bubbas getting a copy for their grandchildren, and even some native New Yorkers. If I truly wanted a more convincing democratic representation of America in all its rainbow glory going into a consuming frenzy, I had to camp in Wall Street. Besides, one of my oldest friends in the world lived three doors down from his store. We arranged to meet for supper.

Anyway, I reserved a stool in a corner by posters of the Man of Steel and the trade paperback shelf. It was an ideal vantage point.

Activity started to kick into gear by 11:00 a.m. The store started having a steady dozen customers in at all times. Steve Wu, who was in charge of the store, made sure that he wouldn't be caught short, so there was no limits set on the number of books that people could buy. They came to the counter with units of 1, 2, 3, 5, even some 10's.

By noon, the number of customers stayed at a constant 25-30. Chameleon kept the price to $2.95 and everyone seemed happy.

Nothing too extraordinary appeared to be happening inside the store, so I mentioned to Steve that I was going to check out the vendors. I didn't have too look far. Up and down Broadway, there was anywhere from two to five of the "comic mongers" on the street, all with stacks of the books. Some didn't even bother to bring out tables, they just set up boxes and had a steady stream of customers waiting in line.

Shouts of "get'em while their hot!" seemed a little too apropos, so after another 30 minutes of scanning this consuming frenzy at its most basic level, I turned back to the store.

By 2:00 p.m., things began to quiet down. By 2:30, the Chameleon employees ordered lunch. After chomping down on an excellent burger, I noticed a bunch of kids admiring the Superman poster in the left front display window.

"It ain't the kid!" one of the window shoppers declared. "He's a clone. The real Superman's dead so his clone is the closest thing to him."

"It's none of them!" declares a voice in the back. Everyone's head turns to one face in particular.

"He ain't dead at all", he says, under a baseball cap. "Did you see that summer special where he fought the Sandman?"

"Superman will never meet the Sandman", said a fourth. "Gaiman doesn't want his character involved."

"No!" responded the cap. "I mean the one that had Superman fight this creature that stole his powers. It turns out it stole his ethics, too, and became him. So, it hid the real Superman away and took over his place. That's the one that got killed by Doomsday. So the original four are going to hear that Clark Kent's somewhere in a hospital in a coma. After they fight it out, they all go on a quest to find the real Superman, who comes back when they get Kent out of a coma."

"When *Superman* #75 came out, so many kids cut school and their parents took time off of work, that the store had a line that went out the door and around the corner."

Everybody gives him a look. "Well, it ain't the robot or the one in the construction worker", says the first kid.

"Nah", agrees the second. "It could be that one", he notes as he points to the remaining member of the four.

"But Superman don't kill and he never shot anything out of his hands."

The debate raged on while I decided to duck back into the store. I knew I'd be hearing this for the next three months.

Sales of the book went comfortably into the four-figure range. Steve Wu wasn't satisfied though.

"You don't know how much I dreamed it would rain today", he admitted. "Then we would have been packed. We wouldn't have had to deal with all them out there," he adds as his eyes drift to the street vendors, who are starting to pack up and fade into the night.

Steve Fritz, THE RAVING READER

It was now late into the afternoon and my friend walked into the store.

"What you want to eat?" he asked. "Submarines or Chinese?"

After a brief discussion, we decided that General Tso's chicken would be good. ■

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Card Collectors Invade; Valiant Through the Roof!

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Hi there, Comic Book Fans! This year marks my 10th anniversary in comics, having done the majority of my business in the US for 8 of them. Special thanks to Gary, Magik, and Bruce for helping me to put Prince George on the "Market Map". Please note that all sales are recorded in US dollars.

Golden Age: My G.A. stuff literally flies out of here, especially in low (price) grades. All-Flash 1 FN $1800.00, Green Lantern 1 FN/VF $5250.00, Flash 48 VG $300.00, Batman 25 FN $500 00

Silver Age: Great sales - ASM 1 GD $425 00, ASM 1 VF $4350.00, Dr. Solar 1 FN $125 00, Brave and Bold 28 VF $800 00, TTA 44 VF $120.00, Classics 167 (0) VF $100.00, X-Men 2-11 set average grade FN+ $800.00. It will be very interesting to see what happens this summer!!

1970s: No margin for lower grades here Astonishing Tales 25 NM $125.00, Ghost Rider 1 NM $125.00, Chamber of Darkness 4 NM $75.00, Son of Satan 1-8 NM $50.00, Marvel Spotlight 5-24 set $500 00. I think I'm going to just collect want lists as a new hobby.

Current: Spawn 5 and 6 in demand here, as well as Bloodshot 2, nowhere to be found. Valiant enjoying momentary success with continuously escalating prices, but shutting out the casual reader in the long run. My investors kill for early Valiant My readers kill for Image. A newsstand here supposedly shredded 300 copies of Spawn 8 because of the Violator/child scene (pg 14), and I sold a bunch extra, but still have plenty left from my reorder. Magnus 1-11, 13-20 $355.00, Spawn 1-8 $50 00, Death 1-3 $12.00, Hellstorm 1 $10.00. My favorite new comics are F.F. 371 red, and Playboy-force oops, I mean Cyberforce. Looking forward to Batman/Grendel part 2 and new Catwoman #1.

There you go, now I must bail. So until Marvel says so long to Stan Lee and then brings him back through the Negative Zone, Make Mine Overstreet!

BRUND ANDREACCHI
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Overview: The current market conditions are a volatile mixture of the good, the bad, and the ugly The good aspect is the positive general climate of the industry, embodying the incredible diversity of material that exists, not to mention what is in the planning stages. There is an "anything is possible" feeling that is both fresh as well as invigorating. A lot of experimentation is going on with covers lately, brought about by fierce competition, so Research and Development does, in fact, exist. But not all of it is good

Movement-enhanced covers may be clever, but having literally every other book foil-stamped or polybagged is certainly going to backfire, and quickly I think. Customers have already become jaded towards gimmicks, having discovered that it's what's inside that makes or breaks a comic book.

A sudden influx of players (no pun intended) from the freshly-dug sports card cemetery is coming aboard the comics industry, fueling the speculator market, and I personally feel a sense of dread (Kinda like discovering Geo strolling on the deck of your cabin cruiser.) We all know what happened to the sports card industry; I have my fingers crossed that a similar debacle doesn't befall comics. I see it happening to non-sports cards already - too much, too fast

These new players will buy plenty of hot, holopoint, thermographic, 3D, Panavision ©, stereoscopic, die-cut, vacuum-packed, heat-seeking issues, especially #1's, but will they order #2 and #3? Will they be around for the long haul, or will they abandon ship upon sighting another new world on the horizon Not that I was ever into sports cards... I wasn't, but I really hope comics don't suffer the same fate.

New Comics News: The big news here (this is being written pre-Turok #1 and Adventures of Superman #500) is Azrael and Knightfall, with all issues of Batman and Detective instant sellouts and re-orders being difficult. Hopefully, DC will be as quick with reprints as they were on Doomsday. Also in the Caped Crusader's Corner is the rumor that Azrael will replace Bruce Wayne after the events of Batman #500 DC can't kill Bruce like they did Kal-El, so what will his fate-worse-than-death be? Well, my Superman resurrection theory has been a matter of record for a year now, so here I go again: Bats is driven over the edge (a rather short trip, right?) by physical exhaustion, judicial frustration, and a bad case of retinal burn from seeing too many costumed super-villains in a row. And wouldn't it be ironic if he were committed to Arkham for psychiatric evaluation? (Personally, I think DC should have Nightwing quit the Titans because of Starfire's death, or affair, or both, and have him become Batman instead of this Azrael-come-lately Imagine, Dick Grayson and Tim Drake as Batman and Robin, kicking costumed butts and taking names!)

DC: The Vertigo line is a big success, with subscriptions steadily increasing on some of the best titles is the business. The Death mini outsold my regular X-Men order! Readers are missing some great stuff in Swamp Thing, Shade, Sandman, etc. (and my favorite - Animal Man). Do yourself a service and try some Also doing well: the Milestone quartet, Flash, and should-be-a-Vertigo Spectre. Azrael #1 & #4 $15@, #2 & #3 $10@. Most Doomsday issues $10@. Superman Death issue $25, bagged $30, Man of Steel #17 $20, #18 $30, JLA #69 $15. The Ray #1-8 $40 the set and $5 for the controversial Lobo's Back #2. (No wonder Bisley didn't get to finish the rest of the mini!) Death #1 $5.

Silver Age DC: Everybody wants Showcase, Brave & Bold, War, and any key issues. B & B #43 (VF+) $125, #24 (VG+) $60, Aquaman #5 (FN/VF) $50, Green Lantern #14 (VF) $99, All-Star Western #10 (VF/NM) $60.

Marvel: Venom. Spider. Fancy cover. Carnage. Embossed. Mini Shrie Ren. Holographix. Guest stars. #1's. Crossovers. Polybagged. Stimpy. Reprints. Heavy Hitters. Rookie Cards. Cable. One-shots. Skulls. 2099 Anniversaries. Unlimited. Overload. Glut. Glut. Nothing can go wrong. Nothing can go wrong Ren & Stimpy #1 $25, Namor #26 $20, Wolverine #4 $30, New Warriors #1 $25, Darkhawk #1 $22. Web of Spidey #1 $35, #96 $5, FF #371 white $10, red (hot) $5, ASM #300 $60, #298 several copies at #35@, #252 & Secret Wars #8 (early black costume issues) $25@, Spectacular Spidey #1 $55, ASM Annual #13 $10.

Silver Age Marvel: Everybody wants all the Marvel titles Literally. Feature, Premiere, Presents, Preview, Spotlight, Super-Heroes, and any key issue of Team-Up and Two-In-One. No wonder...these are the Marvel equivalent of Showcase. Marvel Super-Heroes #1 (NM) $75, Sgt. Fury #100 (NM) $15, Son of Satan #1 (VF+) $15, #2-8 (NM) $10@, Captain America #101 (NM) $100.

Image: Still suffering from a bad case of late shipping, but still selling very well, in spite of it all. Spawn is still the most popular, with the Moore and Gaiman issues selling 35% better than normal, almost four times X-Men numbers! I expect the Cerebus issue, with its Wizard of Oz color schtick, to do even better. Pitt and 1963 are the other biggies, although I fear a lot of references in Mystery Incorporated will be lost on newer generations of readers. Back issues requests are dominated by Spawn: #1 $12 and #4 $10.

Valiant: Should I even bother? I have a book listing Valiant acquisitions and prices which are constantly being updated again. Just multiply guide prices by pi, add your birth date and subtract your weight. oh, all right, here's a few: Harbinger #1 $125, Magnus #12 $100, RAI #1 $40, Shadowman #1 $35-40, Solar #3 $50, X-O #1 $40. (A year ago, I couldn't dump X-O #1's at less than cover! Go Figure.)

Gold Key: A lot of interest in the pre-Valiant franchise titles. Turok #62 drug issue (NM) $10, Lost in Space #22 (VG+) $7, Magnus #12 (VF+) $39, #18 (VF+) $30, #21 (VF+) $20, M.A.R.S. Patrol #3 (VG+) $8, #6 (FN/VF) $8. Flinstones #7 (1st gold Key) (VF/NM) $35.

Dark Horse: I saved DH for last because I have to point out The Blue Lily. I ordered this sight unseen based on Angus McKie's work in early Heavy Metal issues that I remember reading. After reading a mere three pages, I recommended it to a few of my more discriminating customers. I then proceeded to savor the story; it cannot be rushed. This has my vote as the best story of 1993, bar none, even though it's only the first part of four. Angus McKie's script and art is simply amazing. Everybody who has read it has raved about it and has signed up for the series A genuine masterpiece. Tales of the Jedi has made D.H. Comics #7 a sellout. Grendel, Predator Race War, Colonial Marines, and Army of Darkness are all solid titles and solid sellers

Misc. Notes: Vampires still sell well, whether it's Morbius early appearances or current Anne Rice stuff and people are once again asking for early Gladstone issues. Finally, A Valiant footnote: Because of Barry Windsor-Smith's high profile at Valiant, a lot of slow back issues have picked up again. Machine Man (#4 solo art) $5, Weapon X at 2X guide, X-Men #186, 198, 205 at guide. Also requested are X-Men #53, Avengers #100, and Conan #24

That's it for now. Go read Blue Lily.

CHRIS PEDRIN
Pedrin Conservatory
P.O. Box 2192
Redwood City, CA 94064-0219
(415) 369-9307

Hello Collectors from beautiful Redwood City, California, where comic books grow on trees and not one of those trees is a Redwood. I sell by mail order and at conventions. I have been doing so since 1971. Now let me tell you what I've seen recently. . .

Golden Age: As you may have noticed, these books are getting quite scarce. As more and more collectors enter the hobby, and realize what a great investment they are, Golden Age books are gobbled up like last Thanksgivings' Turkey! They don't make these anymore folks, and the pickins' are gettin' slim. More Fun Comics are the hottest by far. Followed by Green Lantern, All Star, and Captain America. Beware: Planet Comics are on the rise. Watch out for huge increases for All Star #3, 8 and 33. Any Golden Age book priced at $100.00 is as good as sold. As I always say . . High-grade books make the "Green-A-Flowin', while Low-grade books 'Keep the smoke A-Blowin'. Recent sales include: More Fun #61(FR10) $155.00, #67 (GD25)$ 440.00, All Star #6 (VG36) $500.00, Wonder Comics #16 (VG42) $130.00. Batman #9 (NM 91) $1750.00. I think the time is right to get on the Golden Age ball now, because in a few years it's going to be very lonely for Golden Age collectors with limited funds.

Silver Age: Is it my imagination, or do I see more Showcase books available than I did Last year? You can find most of these hot books now but if they are anything but High-grade, I say "pass on 'em". I can also suggest jumping ship to The Brave and The Bold. Spidey is steady, FF #2 is very hot and the most requested but probably cooling down anytime soon. DC war books are on fire. Many collectors are beginning to take notice of the Big 5 DC War titles and will walk over burning coals to get at them. The Jetsons are in hibernation but the Moose is Loose. Bullwinkle is playing to rave reviews and both Dell and Gold Key issues are scratching and kicking their way to price increases. Magnus and Turok are solid investments . . but for how long? I say sell 'em this summer. Charlton Hot? Not! Even though Ditko books are on the rise. Oh yea, Let's not forget to mention high demand for Mystery in Space #53-on up. Recent sales include: Our Army at War #81 (VF85) $800.00, Batman #171 (VF88) $200.00, Superman #199 (NM94) $200.00, Showcase #22 (VG36) $550 00, Bullwinkle # (Gold Key, VF88) $140.00, Fantastic Four #48 (FA15) $40.00. I'd also suggest that we take a deep breath, take our time on selecting silver age books, and be sure to buy what we really like. High grade is king, but finding it for a fair price might prove difficult. We, as comic book collectors are in a situation where everybody wants what everybody else wants. This is what causes crazy prices but also what makes it so much fun.

ZZZzzz

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HARLAN ELLISON

more for #2 that #1. Since #2 is definitely the scarcer issue, perhaps it should go for more, say $20. We currently have R&S #3 for $5. I have heard of it going for $8 to $10 locally.

Topps: Topps continues to put out interesting, well produced books. Some have gimmicks, but the content stands on its own. Good artwork.

Dark Horse: Demand for Dark Horse back issues have slowed down from phenomenal to normal levels with the exception of Star Wars, Dark Empire, which continues to be hot.

Tundra: Tundra continues to put out breath-taking graphic albums and stimulating comics series which are worth seeking out and buying.

Valiant: Watch out! Valiant mania has reached its pinnacle. At the Wonder-Con there were seas of them. I don't know if they were selling, but it looks like there are way more copies than readers. We got stuck with lots of Rai and the Future Force #9. Do you want any? People are really going nuts with Turok #1. Look for that to be the straw that broke the Camel's back. Prices remain about the same as last time.

Image: Image mania has also probably reached as high as it's going. With the exception of Spawn, sales are beginning to soften. 1963, Mystery Inc. was fun, but it isn't getting snapped up by the usual Image consumer. Maxx only did OK. Same for Darker Image and Stormwatch. All the people who were investing in these titles will vanish like thieves in the night. Are you ready, speculation houses? Prices are the same as in last report.

Defiant: This is Jim Shooter's new company. Based on his reputation alone, the initial offerings should sell phenomenally. He has assembled an excellent staff of artists and administrators. He will continue to be a force to reckoned with in the industry.

Silver Age: Hey, at least you can read these books. They feature nice artwork and plots. It was heartening to see many people getting together nice piles of silver age issues at the Con. It was either a resurgence in interest or maybe I am one of the last holdouts that still puts my money into silver and gold. I will always buy Silver and Golden age comics in **any** condition. Whether or not they are hot at the moment is not important. Here are some of the reasons.

(1) Old comics were not generally saved, and they are truly rare, unlike their current counterparts (2) Since the entire stock of many old issues is usually **one**, you only need one sale to make it a total sell-out. (3) Because of this scarcity, store stock is always changing. One shop almost never has the same books that a neighboring shop has. The shop is unique, and the neighbor that sells old books is a friend, not a rival competitor as might be the case with sales of the same new books. When everyone is selling the same new books, the price is the only determining factor. When the books are one of a kind, price is not as much of a factor. (I believe in always being fair, on principle, nonetheless). (4) Old comics are historically significant. They reflect the ideals and beliefs of an earlier generation. (5) In many cases, the artwork and stories are unparalleled in modern times. Barks Ducks, Little Lulu, Fawcett, 60's Marvels & DCs, and the entire EC line are shining examples.

Silver Age Marvels: Key Marvels fly when you get them, if priced fairly. Other issues can be a hard sell.

Silver Age DC: DCs are continuing to sell well. They are much harder to get than Marvels. I feel that DC has unfairly taken a back seat in the collectors market. Early 60 DCs are quite different than their Marvel counterparts, but equally merit worthy. Many fans in the know snap them up when they can get 'em. With so many ersatz Marvel companies on the market today (Valiant, Image, and sadly, much of the DC line) its fun to read comics that take a different approach! Remember that DC has been there since the beginning, and has been on top more often than not. There characters are worth more in licensing alone than the rest of the industry combined.

Gold Key: Magnus, Solar, Turok, Everybody wants them. Nobody has them. The rest of the line should perk up too.

Charlton: This line has a lot of nice Ditko art. It may be a sleeper.

EC: I was fortunate enough to get some nice runs of the EC horror titles in on consignment for Wonder Con. I graded and priced them by Overstreet, and almost all sold. Some dealers told me that EC was hot at the conventions. In my 15 years as a dealer, ECs have always been hot. They are marvelous books. I believe in them. The demand for early Mads is increasing. In the past it might have taken a few weeks to sell some. Now the turnover is daily.

Timelys: I wish I could get more. They are much sought after, especially Captain America. I just got a #31 in fine. It sold to the first person I called. There were about a dozen other people that I could have called, who would probably have jumped at the chance.

Fawcett: Captain Marvel titles continue to do well.

There are many other great Golden Age publishers whose books I would love to have for my stores, but it takes time to acquire them and, unfortunately, very few have come my way in recent weeks. If you have any you want to sell, definitely give me a call!

Remember, gang, buy what you love, read what you love, collect what you love. Have fun with the hobby! Happiness is the best investment.

GREG WHITE
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Hello and welcome to our latest report of sales results from the Walt Disney World area. As always our reports will be based upon retail store sales and convention activity. We continue to see strong movement towards the purchase of new and recent product. Considering the glut of new material (not to mention the higher price point on so called Hot books) this has not left the collectors with much back issue money in their pocket. Our sales of pre 1985 comic books have flattened out over the past year. Key, high grade Silver Age continue to sell (these books are tough to replace!) however your average comic in the good to fine range has taken a back seat to purchasing quantities of new number 1 comics or the latest gimmick cover. It still remains hard to convince the majority of our newer clientele that they would be better served with purchasing one fine/V fine copy of any Amazing Spider-Man comic from the 1960's instead of a pile of Adventures of Superman #500. Don't misunderstand me - we sell as many new books as we can, and gladly deposit the checks in the bank. However, this trend is reason enough to be concerned about the future and longevity of our hobby! Enough soap boxing - On with the report;

Golden Age Comics: Sales are still quite good on most issues. Everyone is asking for books and/or conditions that just don't pop up very often. Recent sales: Detective #47 (coverless) $45, Batman #62 VG $200, Mary Marvel #1 VF/NM $450, Blonde Phantom #14 NM $225, Four Color #367 VG $75, Green Lantern #8 VG $250, #11 FN $350.

Silver Age Comics: All high grade DC & Marvel selling well. Lower grade books (below fine condition) have leveled off - they still sell but not as rapidly as a year ago. We receive many requests for Amazing Spider-Man 1-50, Avengers 4, FF 48, 49, and 50, Silver Surfer 1 and 4, Hulk 1-6, All Showcase and Brave & Bold up till 1965, pre no. 200 Batman (funny how Batman outsells Detective four to one!). Also selling well are high grade photo cover books from Dell and Gold Key. Also photo cover Westerns are difficult to keep in stock. Recent Sales: Amazing Spider-Man 3 VF/NM $1200. Amazing Spider-Man 9 VG $125, 50 VF/NM $150, Fantastic Four 14 Fine $100 50 FN/VF $75. Avengers 1 GD/VG $175, Tales of Suspense 59 VF $125, 66 VF/NM $65, Atom 6 VF-NM $50, Batman 100 GD $95, Brave & Bold 29 VG $200, Lois Lane 70 VG $35, Star Trek 4 FN $75, 6 VG $80.

Recent Comics: As you would expect Valiant and Image back issues sell well. 1993 will be an interesting year for both of these companies. Considering their ambitious production schedule, I'm still wondering whether they will be able to maintain both a quality product and customer interest. Time will tell. Marvel X-Titles sell well as do any Venom appearances. DC is hurting on recent book sales - we have few requests for Death of Superman issues. Sword of Azrael 1-4 is the exception. Titles from other independent companies sell sporadically.

Artwork: We never have enough to satisfy demand. A recent purchase of Hanna-Barbera cels and animation drawings will help. Recent sales: (4) Ron Frenz Thor pages $150, Mike Zeck Capt. America page $50, Jack Kirby Gilberton page $150, Flintstone Kids cel set up with background $60. That's all. Take care!!

BRUCE W. EDWARDS
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Welcome again from North Central Kentucky. We just had our 16th mail bid auction, the results of which, may shed some interesting light on the market. We will be listing some low as well as some strong prices realized for several market segments and see if there is any trend to note:

Golden Age to Sixties (except Marvel and DC): Beware #7 (Jan 54) Glossy VG $22 00; Beware #11 (Aug 52) GD/VG $25 00; Beware #13 (Jan 55) Glossy VG $17.00; Beware #16 (#4, Jul 53) VG/FN very glossy $19.00; Black Cat Mystery #38 (Aug 52) Nice VG $20 00; Ghostly Weird #122 (Mar 54) Sharp FN $32.00; Mighty Mouse 3-D #2 (Nov 53) Glossy VG/FN $9.00; Super-Mystery Comics V7 #3 (Jan 48) VG/FN $17.10; Suspense #6 (Jan 51) VG 18.50; Uncanny Tales #4 (Dec 52) Glossy VG $26.00; Worlds of Fear #3 (Mar 52) Nice VG $25.00; I Spy #1 (May 66) Glossy FN 47 $25; Land of the Giants #1

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(Nov 68) Sharp FN $27.00; Oswald the Rabbit FC #102 (Apr 46) VG $6.25; POGO #12 (Apr 53) VG/FN $9.25; Popeye #3 (Aug 48) GD $12.00; Star Trek #32 (Aug 75) VG/FN $10.00; Star Trek #42 (Jan 77) Sharp FN $10.00; Casey Crime Photographer #3 (Dec 49) VG $15.10; Crime Must Lose! #6 (Apr 51) VG $8.10; Crime Must Lose! #9 (Oct 51) VG $8.10, Crime Patrol #14 (Oct 49) Sharp VG $78.10; Headline Comics #49 (Oct 51) FN $7.50; Justice Traps the Guilty #30 (Sep 51) VG $13.10; Justice Traps the Guilty Lot: #36 FN $12.10; Police Against Crime #2 (Jun 54) VG/FN $20.10; Racket Squad In Action #4 (Dec 52) VG/FN $14.10; Wanted #11 (Jan 48) Sharp FN/VF $18.10;

Horror, crime and T.V. related issues have generally been very strong while Disney, Funny Animals are in low demand currently. One trend worth noting is that Golden Age to sixties esoteric books generally have a very strong collector base and are not fueled by the speculation that plagues so many modern (and even silver-age super-hero) issues. They may not have as fast a price rise but they are very unlikely to undergo significant price decreases like many of the "hot" books.

Marvel: Amazing Spider-Man #302 (Jul 88) VF 10.00; Amazing Spider-Man #304 (Sep 88) VF 10.00; Astonishing Tales #1 (Aug 1970) VF 13.50, Avengers #31 (Aug 66) VF 15.00; Avengers #40 (May 67) NM 17.00; Avengers #47 (Dec 67) Glossy white NM 14.00; Daredevil #38 (Mar 68) NM 18.00; Guardians of the Galaxy #1 (Jan 90) NM 1.75; Iron Fist #1 (Nov 75) VG/FN 4.00, Iron Man #5 (Sep 68) Glossy VG 4.50; Iron Man #10 (Feb 69) VG 3.50; Iron Man #16 (Aug 69) Fine 3.00; Journey into Mystery #119 (Aug 65) FN/VF 20.00; Journey into Mystery #119 (Aug 65) VG 4.00; Journey into Mystery #125 (Feb 66) VG 4.00; Marvel Feature #1 (Dec 71) Nice VG 18.00; Marvel Feature #2 (Mar 72) Sharp VG/FN 9.00. Marvel Feature #3 (Jun 72) FN/VF 15.00; Marvel Feature #4 (Jul 72) Sharp VG/FN 2.50; Marvel Premiere #3 (Jul 72) FN 4.00; Marvel Premiere #3 (Sep 72) VF 20.75; Marvel Premiere #25 (Oct 75) VF 10.00, Marvel Premiere #4 (Jun 72) Glossy VF 10.00, Nick Fury #2 (Jul 68) Glossy VF 15.00; Nick Fury #5 (Oct 68) Glossy FN/VF 15.00; Nick Fury #6 (Nov 68) Glossy VF 9.00; Nick Fury #7 (Dec 68) Glossy VF 9.00; Nick Fury #8 (Jan 69) Glossy NM 9.00; Sgt Fury #10 (Sep 64) GD/VG 3.00; Silver Surfer #10 (Nov 69) Nice VG 4.00; Silver Surfer #16 (May 70) VG/FN 4.00; Silver Surfer #35 (Mar 90) NM 4.00; Silver Surfer #36 (Apr 90) NM 2.00; Special Marvel Edition #15 (Dec 73) FN 15.00; Special Marvel Edition #16 (Feb 74) VG 2.50; Spectacular Spider-Man #27 (Feb 79) FN/VF 3.00; Spectacular Spider-Man #81 (Aug 83) NM. 3.00; Spectacular Spider-Man #82 (Sep 83) NM. 3.25; Sub-Mariner #14 (Jun 69) VG/FN 3.00; X-Men #52 (Jan 69) VF 4.00; X-Men #205 (May 86) NM 5.00; X-Men #211 (Nov 86) NM. 5.00; X-Men Special #1 (Dec 70) Glossy VG/FN 3.00.

By reviewing the above Marvel prices realized it seems apparent that high grade (FN/VF or better when accurately graded) silver age Marvels are holding there value at guide prices while lower grades are not fairing as well. More modern issues in high grade are fairing poorly overall, with a few exception.

D. C. Comics: Detective Comics #343 (Sep 65) FN 9.00; #369 (Nov 67) aFine 16.00; Flash #180 (Jun 68) Sharp FN 3.25; Green Lantern #66 (Jan 69) NM 15.00; #67 (Mar 69) NM 16.00, My Greatest Adventure #36 (Oct 59) FN 20.00; #41 (Mar 60) FN 12.00; #42 (Apr 60) FN 12.00; Mystery in Space #62 (Sep 60) VG 20.00; #78 (Sep 62) aFine 21.00; #81 (Feb 63) Sharp VG/FN 10.00; #84 (Jun 63) Glossy aFine 10.00, Plastic Man #3 (Apr 67) VF 11.00; Robin Complete Set. #1-6 all NM 7.00; Sandman #14 (Mar 90) NM 10.00; Secret Six #1 (May 68) Sharp VG/FN 12.00; Strange Adventures #147 (Dec 62) FN/VF 13.00; Superboy #129 (May 66) glossy VF 13.00; Superman Annual #7 (Sum 63) Glossy VG 5.01 Superman's Girl Friend Lois Lane #29 aFine 17.00, Watchmen Complete Set: #1-12 all NM 10.00; Wonder Woman #120 (Feb 61) VG 8.00; World's Finest #161 (Oct 66) VF 10.00; World's Finest #199 (Dec 70) aVF 30.00.

D.C. Silver Age is a strong spot in the market right now. Many D.C. Silver Age commanded good prices regardless of the condition while some of the newer books were especially weak. Batman interest has significantly cooled and we let a large selection of 1970's and more recent Batman books go for 50%-65% of guide. Strong demand is present for Silver age Superman, Jimmy Olsen and Lois Lane books with many collectors competing for the books we had. You can't see it from the above list but we had many Jimmy Olsen and Lois Lane multiple book lots that sold quickly in the 90% to 150% of guide range

Independents: Aliens V2 Complete Set #1-4 all VF/NM 10.25; Aliens: Earth War Complete Set. #1-4 all NM 6.25; Flaming Carrot #1 (Killian Barracks) NM 28.00; Groo #2 (Feb 83) VF 10.00; #3 (Apr 83) VF 2.25; #4 (Sep 83) VF 2.25; #5 (Oct 83) VF 2.25; #6 (Dec 83) VF 2.25; #8 (Apr 84) VF 2.25, Magnus Robot Fighter #0 w/off center card NM 70.00; Magnus Robot Fighter #3 NM with coupon 17.00; Solar #2 (Oct 91) NM 15.00; Solar #3 (Nov 91) NM 25.00, Starslayer #2 (1983) NM 3.25; Starslayer #3 (1982) NM 2.25.

As the small sampling above illustrates, most independent books are not bringing near guide prices for once hot issues. The only exception, naturally, is Valiant, which continues to see strong collector and investor interest. The collector can manage to buy many of the quality independents (except Valiant) at quite reasonable prices these days provided patience and diligence are used. One day these quality independents will probably see a rise in demand. Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles is a good example Issue #1 first prints are in low demand now but the patient investor will probably realize a good return 10 to 15 years hence when TMNT has obtained a nostalgia factor among current 8 to 15 year olds.

Summary:

I think an area that should be explored is the very thin market that exists for the major key books (the $10,000 and up books). Prices on these books are easily subject to manipulation by even one individual with a decent sum of money it's happened before with coins (where the capital required is much greater for this type of manipulation) so please, buy what you like and not what you think is a "guaranteed" investment Enjoy comics for the fun and joy they bring you and you'll always be glad you are a comic book collector.

Mark Wilson
World's Finest Comics & Collectibles
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Did you know that it has been estimated that there are at least 1,500,000 (that's one & a half million!) comic book buyers world wide? This important bit of information was recently brought to my attention, and it just about floored me. I had no idea that so many people bought comic books. Now, you notice that I said buyers and not collectors. The vast majority of these people are strictly new issue buyers and not back issue collectors. Still, this is a significant statistic since the success of our market is directly linked to the success of the new issue market.

I must add, by the way, that a great deal of this success is due to a man by the name of Steve Geppi, who created the world's largest distribution company.

Imagine what would happen to our market if only ten percent of these buyers decided to become collectors of back issue comics. If you think it's tough to buy high grade comics now, it would be near impossible with an extra 150 thousand people to compete with. You probably think that this can't happen. Don't bet on it! At the rate the back issue market has been growing nothing would surprise me any more. On to another reality.

Golden Age: The times they are a changin'. Over the last six months, I have noticed three factors about Golden Age collecting which I feel have strengthened this part of the marketplace. (1) Many Silver Age collectors are entering this market for the first time, and with a vengeance! A great deal of the Silver Age market success of the last four years is due to the Overstreet Update (and other "would be" price guides). Since these guides were issued many times per year and contain pricing for post 1956 comic books, this market was stimulated, to the point where many Silver Age books are priced higher than their Golden Age counterparts. The "out of sight, out of mind" Golden Age market had very little stimulation during the same four year period. Remember the argument "Golden Age is too expensive to collect?" This is no longer true, and many collectors are taking notice. (2) Lower grades are collectible. One of the plagues of the Golden Age market is the virus called "Mint-itis". If it wasn't near mint or better they wouldn't buy it. I can confidently say that this virus is now coming under control. Collectors are now waking up to the fact that many of the Golden Age books simply do not exist in NM or MT. And many who used to break out in hives at the thought of placing a VG book in their otherwise high grade collection are learning to cope with this reality. (3) Professionally restored books are gaining acceptance. More collectors then ever are accepting restoration as long as it is professionally performed and it is disclosed in the sale.

Recent sales: (Note: All following sales were at or slightly above current guide value with an average of 1.2 x guide, so I've not bothered listing the actual sale price. This list is meant to show the variety of material that is selling well.) Action #5, #9, & #10; All-Star #4, #5 & #9; Batman #1-10 and several below #100, Buck Rogers #1; Detective Comics #1, #2, #32, & #64; Captain America #1 & #9; Flash #5 & #10; Several All-Flashes, Several Captain Marvels & Whiz Comics; Big All American #1, New York World's Fair 1939; Human Torch #2; Adventure #44, #57, & #61; More Fun #21, #32, #54 & #56; Superman #4, #5, #7, #10, #16, #19, #21, #23, #24, & many more. 2 copies of If The Devil Would Talk (1958). A large group of Sensation Comics and Wonder Woman sold quickly. And many, many lesser titles sold very well. By the way, Dell comics have

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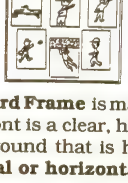

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been selling very well for me. I will be offering an interesting selection of Golden Age comics (including a complete run of Superman) in my next catalog and I'll report the results in the next issue of CBM.

Silver Age: There is really nothing that I could say that probably hasn't already been said in another report. The market is very strong and shows no signs of letting up. There is still a strong trend towards the purchase of high grade books, which is expected, but not entirely healthy. We are becoming collectors of grade as opposed to collectors of comic books. This is sad because I really enjoyed reading the books from the Silver Age era. Once upon a time, the purpose of putting together a run was so you could keep up with the life and times of your favorite hero, artist, or writer. You collected because you enjoyed the cover & what was between the pages. I realize that many of you will not agree with me on this point, but that's OK. Rather than debate the point, I want to encourage you. If you are a high grade collector keep on collecting high grade, but please do yourself a favor and buy some GD or VG copies just to read. They are very inexpensive compared to the prices you are used to paying and are well worth the investment. I am not alone in this thinking as I have over 1,000 customers who agree with this. Take care until next issue.

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Well now, our computer is back on line, so hopefully we'll avoid being "typo-ed" to death, in this, our post-Oakland Wonder-Con report. Despite the proximity to tax-time, we saw more people spending money than usual, so maybe enough people have faith in Clintonomics. And so...

Golden Age: Still trailing Silver Age overall. Some transactions include : *Red Raven* #1 NM $2,500, *Donald Duck in Terror on the River* VF+ $500; *Donald Duck in Volcano Valley* VF+ $300. As you can see, Big Barks Books (say that 3 times real fast!) only move at less than guide. An unrestored *New Comics* #5 in VG+ sold at a bargain $400.00. We predict lower grade unrestored pre-hero DC's will shoot up as supply dwindles.

Silver Age: Still hot, on the whole. We sold, most notably, a *Strange Tales* #110 FN- for $250; *Showcase* #3 FN- $700; #13 VG $400; *Flash* #121 VG $30, and *Batman* #100 in F- for $375. More of the ultra-high grade Magic Lightning Collection sold at 1 1/2-3x guide including issues of *Blazing Western, Racket Squad, Fightin' Airforce,* and *U. S. Airforce,* all still bargains at $20 and under, although the collection is gradually dwindling.

Post Silver Age: This area is picking up! Wrightson *Swamp Thing* is the title most often asked for, even in low grades, such as a #9 in GD for a quick $2 sale! Art Adams' *Longshot* Marvel mini-series is actually moving again, but only at about 15% below guide. Spider-Man titles are strong, including MT copies of *Amazing #*'s 205 at $6 and 206 at $5, *Web #*'s 31, 32 at $8 each and *Spectacular #*'s 131 & 132 at $5.50 each.

Recent: Valiant is King! We blew out a truckload of our stock and consignments by dipping 10% below guide and offering discounts for quantity! For example, Magnus #0 & #1 sold as a NM pair for a bargain $65!. In fact, we sold too many too quickly to keep track of each sale, but almost all pre-Unity Valiants moved at these discounts, although the Gold editions are slow. *Sandman* and *New Titans* (2nd series) are strong at guide. DC's *The Ray* is very hot, with #'s 1-3 at guide and 4-6 at 25% over guide moving fast. We wonder if the collected edition will slow this trend (probably?). We think the self-published series *Bone* by Jeff Smith is poised to catch up to *Cerebus* within 5 years, as all 8 issues (and counting!) are kept in print and soon to be collected in albums. #1 first printings are strong at $20 a pop, with no end in sight! Our top recommendation for investment, as the print runs are still low and most people have yet to discover this high-quality series at still reasonable prices.

Non-Sports Cards: Moderate sales only at wholesale and bargain prices. Everyone seems to have plenty in Northern California. A *Twin Peaks* set went for only $15 and *Batman* Movie wax packs (First & Second series) sell rapidly to little kids at 50¢ a pack, only a nickel above cover.

See ya in a month, and invest wisely and for enjoyment!

ARTHUR BARKEY and JEFF TALVI
Collecting Issue
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Kent, WA 98032

Hello out there comic book readers and collectors alike. Over the next few reports we will be writing about the technical end of comic book investing.

Let us start by looking at the difference between buying a hot comic book & selling it for a profit. Suppose a near mint copy of *Amazing Spiderman* #122 is purchased for $100 (In reality, though the guide price of this book is $100, a purchase price of $200 or more would not be unusual since the book is considered hot). If the purchaser needed to sell the book right away the maximum a dealer would probably pay is $75 (75% which allows the dealer to make a profit when selling the book to someone else). In order for the purchaser to just break even, the value of the book would have to jump by 33 1/3% to $133.33 ($133.33 X 75% = $100). Now if dealers are only willing to pay 50% of guide for the book just to break even, the book would have to double in value to $200 ($200 X 50% = $100) And in order to make a 100% profit, the book value would have to increase 4 fold to $400 ($400 X 50% = $200) We ask you investors out there, how many books increase by 400%? Those that do, how long does it usually take to get there? (See the article entitled Marvel Silver is Collector Gold on page 118 of CBM #1) To make it simple, a very small percentage of comics increase by that amount and it takes many years to do so!

To throw another monkey wrench into the investing-in-recent comic-books business, suppose we purchase some newer books produced over the last 10-15 years. There is a good chance that since so many of these books are readely available to dealers, a dealer might only offer 20% of guide, If anything at all (See CBM #1, page 18, General Information under About Pricing). At 20% of guide, $100 worth of books would only fetch $20! A $100 purchase of these books would need a price guide value of $500, just to break even (A 500% increase $500 X 20% = $100). To make a 100% profit the books would have to increase in value 10 fold ($1000 X 20% = $200)

The point we're trying to make is collecting comics books for investment purposes can be a very tricky business. (Not that you shouldn't invest in comics but…) Even if you're not a math genius, you should be aware of these facts. If you're purchasing newer books be very clear on the numbers. If you want to know what a certain book will fetch, ask a few dealers how much they would pay for the book. In most instances it would be worth purchasing the books new. If you're into buying multiple copies of certain books, it would make sense to purchase the books from a dealer who is willing to give a discount (anywhere from 10 - 30%). Of course the best purchases are those made because you like to read the comic and you enjoy collecting it. Making a profit then would only become important if you needed to sell your collection in an emergency.

Until next time…Go with love in your heart (and money in your pockets).

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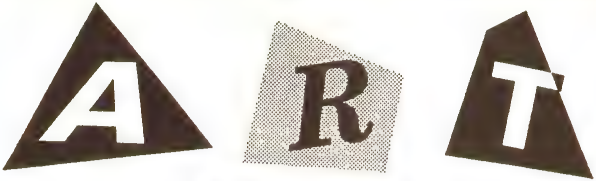
Everyone in the retail end of the comic business seems to be happy. I haven't heard much complaining at the shows I've been to this year. High energy driven by big sales is the norm and not the exception. There must be thousands of new collectors entering the hobby. I would guess that the baseball card shops that have turned into comic dealers are supplying their existing customers, and not taking current customers from existing stores. If the sports card store comic dealers are introducing their customers to comics, these collectors will eventually get around to the existing stores. The existing comic shops are going to have a much broader inventory, more back issues... Golden Age, Silver Age, and such... to offer to the new collectors. Is this what others see as happening, that the existing stores will benefit from the card dealers offering comics to their customers? It's a point definitely worth considering.

Now to recent sales. I find it interesting to examine the comics that are ordered from us. I obtained sets of *All-Top Comics* and *Terrors of the Jungle* which were both sold within an hour. I don't find this unusual. I've had orders (in some cases multiple orders) for the following comics: *Amazing Spiderman* #1, *Annie Oakley* #2 (1948), *Attack on the Planet Mars, Babe: Amazon of the Ozarks* (lots of activity on this peculiar title), *Beany and Cecil, Black Cat* #1, *Black Terror* #1, *Blonde Phantom, Brain Boy* #1 (watch out for this one), *Captain Marvel* #1 (1968, several NM copies at 50% over guide), *Captain Marvel Adventures* (very low in the guide, always sells at about 50% over guide in any grade), many comics with L.B. Cole covers, *Crimes by Women* (I could sell 6 to 10 copies of each issue quickly), *Dennis the Menace, Famous Funnies* w/Frazetta covers in any grade, Exciting Comics (specifically the Schomburg covers - and any of his other Nedor issues).

Gold Key/Valiant reincarnations (I'm sure this is no surprise to anyone), *Little Lulu* (this is a surprise to me, as this title has been fairly dormant for the last 2-3 years but the complete run I picked up two months ago has been a surprisingly quick-moving title), *Mad* (comics or magazines, they are universally popular and often out-strip guide prices), *My Friend Irma* (believe it or not, I quickly sell every issue), *Phantom* (Gold Key, Harvey, Ace, King, - they all go. This guy is popular!), and *Sensation Comics*



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(a classic Golden Age title. Lots of super heroes and low prices).

Special Artists: When considering individual comic sales, the most popular GA/SA artist is without a doubt... Jack Kirby! I admit he has probably done more comics than any other artist, but every comic he has touched is a good seller and probably always will be. His romance comics have just as short a shelf-life as his Golden Age Captain America issues. Investors take note!

And don't overlook Matt Baker when it comes to fan following, either. His standout cheesecake art style has always been popular. Nobody draws a female like he does. Investors, don't consider his work as a long shot!

Another artist to look at is Steve Ditko. Any pre-code horror comics and any of his Charlton appearances, up to and including the 25 cent cover price issues, are bargains at current price guide values.

Investors: For steady, safe, long term price appreciation, consider these areas: funny animals (or people) - particularly cartoon or animated TV characters, romance comics, or war comics. None of these areas (with the exception of Disney and Archie titles) has had much publicity in the fan press during the entire existence of organized fandom. Many of these comics are as much as 50 years old and only guide for a few bucks. If you are thinking of getting into this area. Start now! Don't expect to see much of this low dollar, vintage material two years from now.

Pre-Marvel Atlas: In particular, take some time and look at the pre-Marvel Atlas issues. They are nearly impossible to find above Fine grade. If you want high grade copies, plan on spending much more than guide. With artists like Russ Heath, Joe Maneely, and Gene Colan, these issues have faithful followers that search them out at nearly every show I attend. The good news for the collector is that most dealers don't realize Atlas' potential. The bad news is that unfortunately, many dealers don't carry the titles.

Superman: In the stock market, the idea is to buy low and sell high. It takes a very small leap in thinking to realize that this also applies to comic collecting. The character that has been terribly overlooked in the Golden Age market and is ready for a rebirth in the collecting realm is Superman. With the possibility of a new TV show, a new movie, and the recent Death of Superman and the "Four Supermen" media blitz, the superhero's superhero is all set to start climbing in value. With his death, I think many of us realize we had been taking Superman for granted. He was always there, he would always be there, and so why seek him out? How many comic characters, however, have had such an effect on the general public as to be influences for songs, art, comedy sketches, and other artistic media? Superman, Clark Kent, Lois Lane, Jimmy Olsen, Krypton, Kryptonite, and the Daily Planet...all began in the early issues of Action Comics and Superman. These early golden age issues are, for their importance, priced low and in the realm of the stock market would definitely be blue chip. Remember when these issues start climbing in value that you had been warned.

Current Comics: Jeff Smith is definitely doing something right with his title *Bone*. It is extremely hard to get hold of a #1, first printing. I sold one at the last show for $25.00 and the buyer didn't care one bit. If I see and issue of *Bone* for sale, I buy it. The first issue is up to printing #5, I believe, which shows its tremendous popularity. I have yet to meet anyone who has read it and hasn't started collecting it. And it isn't even in the guide. Yet!

New Discovery: Two years ago, I located a comic that I had never seen or heard of. Over the last 24 months I have shown it to most major dealers and lots of smaller ones. No one who has seen it was aware of its existence. It is *Speed Merchants* #1, printed in 1947 by Hollywood Press. The art is by Jack Pierce and it has a 15 cent cover price. This comic deals with auto racing and I suspect that this might be the first auto racing comic ever printed. It is inscribed by the artist to Floyd Clymer, who was the publisher of the Indy 500 yearbooks and a multitude of other automotive literature. The popularity of auto racing memorabilia could have an effect on the value of this unique item. If any one has a copy of this comic or knows anything about it, please contact me. Till next time.

ROBERT ROGOVIN
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Greetings from New York, the city voted "most bang for your buck" by your friendly neighborhood terrorist. We're still feeling the after shocks from the big bang but things are returning to normal, sort of. Now that I have your attention lets get down to it. Same old, same old. Golden Age unrestored gold sells best, but everything sells. A book with a little spine seal? No problem. Color Touch? Big deal. Clean and press? No sweat. Golden Age collectors deal in reality. I love 'em. As an ever increasing number of golden age books are restored the collectors just take it in stride.

DC: Some key book sales. Batman 1 VG/FN with some spine seals $7000, Adventure 40 VG+ $5750, Detective 66 FN/VF $850 (discounted to a friend, I'm sure I could have gotten my original price of $1100), and Sensation 1 VF $3800.

Timely: Haven't had any keys to speak of other than an All Winners 1 FN- for $1000.

EC: I had a lot of them and they sold well. There's much more interest in the Horror titles than the Science Fiction, and MAD always sells well at or above guide (as does Panic). These books sell in any grade. There will always be a market for well written, beautifully drawn books. Some recent sales Shock SuspenStories 6 FN+ $45, 9 FN/VF $78, 13 FN+ $95. Vault of Horror 13 FN+ $200, 17 FN+ $110. Haunt of Fear 5 VF $250, 19FN+ $100. Tales From the Crypt 21 VG+ $170 and 27 FN+ $115.

Archie: 1950's Archie sold well in high grade at guide, much to my surprise.

Gold Key: Hot, someone must be bringing these guys back, anybody know who? Magnus 1 FN/VF $125. Turok, Son of Stone 5 VF $110.

Atlas: Also hot (what else is new) with the four "main line" titles (Strange Tales, Tales of Suspense, Tales to Astonish, Journey Into Mystery) particularly hot. Sales of these titles in high grade at 1.5 to 2 times guide. High demand for the Superhero appearances as well. Submariner 33 VF 500, 35 VF 340, Strange Tales 84 VF+ 150, 64 VF $90. Tales to Astonish 9 VF+ $250.

DC Silver: Still hot even though prices are starting to get up there. High grade really moves quickly while mid grade takes a little longer. Some key book sales. Flash 105 VF with tiny color touch $2300. 123 VF $575, 123 FN $250, 129 VF $125, Green Lantern VF $1200, in FN $600, Aquaman 1 VF+ 550, VF/VF+ 475, VF 225, Hawkman 1 VF 325, Rip Hunter 1 FN+ $125, and Lois Lane 1 FN/VF $750. Showcase still sells no matter what happens. 5 VG $500, with ? seal, 10 FN/VF $800, 14FN $850, 60 VF+ $125, Brave and Bold 28 VG $675, Atom 1 VF $450.

Marvel Silver: Same as DC but the mid grades take even longer to sell, with VG non keys moving best at a discount. Some recent key books sales. Spidy 1 GD+ $850, 2 VG $425, 14 GD/VG $175. Avengers 4 VF/VF+ $600, Cap 100 VF+ $290, FN $120, Fantastic Four 2 FN $700, 4VG $300, 5 GD/VG $225 12 VG $115. Daredevil 1 VF+ $1100. Silver Surfer 1 VF $250, 4 VF/NM $400, X-Men 1 with color touch $1690, FN $895.

Over and out from NY.

JOE DUNGAN
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Greetings from San Antonio. It's Fiesta time now and most of the city is in a party frenzy. Before starting on the report I would like to say that it is a priviledge to be one of the CBM's advisors and I really enjoy the new format the publication has taken. My sincerest wishes for your continued success. And so we begin.

New Issues: New book sales have been dominated by marvel (X-titles and Spider titles). Image and especially Valiant. DC is hanging in there, with their Knightfall and Reign of the Supermen storylines. However, the ongoing Flash and Teen Titans storylines are not gaining interest down here. Marvel is still leading the way in new issue sales mostly, it seems, because of force of habit. However, the average consumer is becoming more hesitant about buying books with $2.95 to $4.95 cover prices. Sales were moderate on specialty issues such as Cable #1, Spectacular Spider-Man #200, and Uncanny X-Men #300. The issues sell at a moderate to rapid pace, although Shadowman, Hard Corps and Rai and the Future Force trail behind the other Valiant titles. Sales on recent Image releases have only been moderate. Spawn still leads the way with the other titles all of about equal demand. Darker Image #1 did not do as well as expected, while Wildstar #1 did better than expected. A difficulty associated with being a new store is that many of the Image titles solicited months before we started ordering are only now arriving. This has been a major inconvenience as it necessitates placing reorders to make sure that a full line of the current weeks issues are available. Image has a propensity for being late with their books which makes one reluctant to order heavily on any of their future projects, even the upcoming heralded Valiant/Image crossover. Dark Horse seems to be the hardest hit by the upsurgence in the Valiant sales with the orders on most of their titles being cut in half.

Recent Back Issues: The defining word is Valiant, especially pre-Unity issues. In the past few weeks, three complete runs of Magnus 1-16, Solar 1-16, X-O 1-15, Shadowman 1-10, and Rai 0-8 have sold. Over that same time span, two complete runs of Archer & Armstrong 1-10, Eternal Warrior 1-10, and Six, yes Six complete runs of Harbinger 1-15 have been purchased. Bloodshot and Hard Corps

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back issues, although they do sell, seem to already be in the hands of most collectors. Most of the pre-Unity Valiant sell for anywhere from 1.25 to 1.5 times guide while the later issues bring slightly over guide prices. On a 100 point scale, pre-Unity Valiant scores a One Hundred, while other Valiant books rate a seventy.

Marvel back issue sales are again mainly restricted to their X- and Spider-Man titles with Wolverine and Venom following closely behind. The Hulk - Future Imperfect two issues mini-series is also frequently requested. Most issues of these titles sell well at guide and score a respectible seventy. The rest of the Marvel titles rate a forty.

Back issue sales on Image titles are moderate with Spawn selling the best. The inability of Image to get their product out as scheduled is probably affecting sales as people are unsure if the next advertised issue will ever come out. Now that new issues of Wildcats, Brigade, Shadowhawk, Supreme and Cyberforce have hit the stands, demand for back issues of those titles has picked up. The most requested issues are Spawn #2-5, Shadowhawk #2 and 3, Wildcats #2 and Cyberforce #1. Most Image titles sell at guide to 1.2 times guide. Image back issues rate a sixty.

Recent back issue sales on DC titles have basically been restricted to Batman (#488-up), Detective (#659-up), Sword of Azrael (#1-4), Justice League of America (#69-up), Teen Titans (#93-up), and the Superman related titles. These issues rate an eighty-five. All other DC comics rate a sad thirty.

Back issue sales on Dark Horse comics, other than Aliens vs. Predator have been extremely slow. The rating for Dark Horse is an abysmal twenty.

1970s Comics: The primary movers from the 70s have been Marvel Spotlight #12 at 1.5 times guide, Son of Satan #1-8 at 2 times guide, Adventures into Fear #20-31 at guide, House of Secrets #92 at 1.2 times guide, tomb of Dracula #1-10 at guide, New Gods #1-9 at guide, Swamp Thing #1-20 at guide, and Superman #233-241 at 1.25 times guide. Select other issues, such as Morbius appearances, first appearances and #1 issues sell, but overall 70's Marvel rate a fifty, and 70's DC rate a forty-five.

1950s and 1960s Comics: Looking at sales on 60s books is like looking through a two way mirror. Mail order and conventions sales on 50s and 60s books are very good (rating an eighty) especially in VG or less and VF or better condition. DCs still out sell Marvels. However, in-shop sales are fairly slow (rating a forty) with the sales being predominantly Marvel. Gold Key titles, especially Magnus and Dr. Solar, are selling well in all grades whether in the shop, at conventions, or through the mail (rating and eighty). In the store, books (regardless of condition) must be priced near guide while at conventions and for mail order, very high grade books command well over guide prices for DCs, Gold Keys, and Marvels.

The demand for 50s DC and pre-superhero Marvels is seeing a steady increase through all venues. Expect this trend to continue as more and more individuals realize the true scarcity of these books, especially in fine or better condition with white pages.

Non-Sport Cards: Sales on both pre- and post- 1980s non-sports cards have been very encouraging. I have encountered fairly strong demand for non-sport singles, sets, packs, and boxes of many types. Reported sales are as follows: 1965 Lost in Space (EX) $275, 1966 Philadelphia Tarzan set (NM) $175, 1958 Target Moon (blue) set (NM/M) $700, 1978 Star Wars (Wonder bread) set $18, 1976 Star Trek set with stickers and wrapper (NM) $200, Unity (complete with chromium cards) $75, Silver Surfer (with promo card) $29, Hildebrandt II sets $11, X-Men I (including holo's and promo) $40, and others. Singles from such sets as Wings, Zorro, Bat-Laffs, Batman, Voyage to the Bottom of the Sea, Weird-Oh's, Wacky Packages, Man from Uncle, Lost in Space, Outer Limits, Mars Attacks, and a variety of others have been selling in all grades. Wax boxes of older titles such as 1978 Elvis ($45), 1984 Star Trek II ($125), 1976 Marvel Superhero stickers ($300) have sold as well as those of the more recently released X-Men II ($28), Hildebrandt II ($35), Marvel Masterpieces ($70), DC Cosmic Teams ($27), Silver Surfer ($55), and Unity ($25). Wax pack sales have been dominated by the newer series: DC Cosmic Teams, X-Men II, Marvel Masterpieces, Marvel Universe II, Marvel Universe III, and Hildebrandt II. However, older wax packs from the Munsters, 1976 Star Trek Deep Space Nine, Valiant and Marvel Universe IV all appear to be winners based upon pre-orders. The Defiant Prism series appears as though it will sell extremely well even though most collectors we have talked with are unhappy with the format.

Comic Character and Other Toys: Both sci-fi and superhero toys, in general, are up. We are having a difficult time keeping certain figures on the shelves. The Kenner Queen Alien and Bishop figures are selling for $20 each, whereas the Scorpion and Gorilla Aliens are bringing prices up to $15 each. The new Toy Biz X-Men and Fantastic Four lines are also great sellers with Gambit, Iceman, and the Invisible Girl leading the group. Kenner Super Powers figures are still in the lime light. Some figures we recently sold include the Martian Manhunter (MOC) $25, Aquaman (MOC) $35, and an amazing $45 for the Red Tornado (MOC). This line of toys will continue to escalate with the return of the superhero market that Toy Biz has revived. The two most promising toy lines to look forward to this summer are both manufactured by Playmates. Star Trek: The Next Generation and Star Trek: The Classic Series boxed collector's set, which has a limited production run. The latter really looks fantastic. Playmates is proving that exceptional sculpting and detailing is possible.

14 Predictions: 1. Ultraverse/Hardcase, Prime, Strangers (May be sleeper)... 2. Darkhorse Superhero's: ($1 00 cover price - a rarity now) 3 Continuity: (Possibly under erected) 4. Shamans Tears: (A sleeper?) 5. Venom: Funeral Pyre #1 (Venom - need I say more!) 6. Solar #24 (Dr Eclipse) 7. Sword of Azreal: (The new Batman?) 8 Vengeance of Bane #488, especially #489 (Key issue) 9. Guardians of the Galaxy #39: (Wolverine's history) 10. Death Mate prologue (Valiant/Image crossover) 11. Cat Woman #1: (Bane & Catwoman working together?) 12. Hero Illustrated: (Amazing Spiderman #1 give away) 13. Batman/Grendal: (The original's last battle for awhile?) 14. Showcase #7 and #8: (Death of Two-Face?)

Until next time, so long from Joe Dungan, Joe McNease (toys), and Gary Orosco (new issues).

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Overview: So....what is the current overview of the market, you ask. Gimmicks.....of all sorts, polybags with trading cards, holograms, coupons, prisms, new holograms which seem to raise above the cover. The only areas in which there seems to be any substantial interest in what used to be known as story (you know, that which goes after the hologram, or near the coupon), are with Valiant and the Vertigo line. We're stuck in the middle of a glut of #1's; a mini-series of 2 becomes a regular series so there are now two #1's to get, first appearances of villains (who may never be seen again?), deaths, resurrections, cripplings, chronic price rises. **I'm not a comic book store any more, I'm a Cracker Jacks box, where everyone comes in to pull out a prize.** Anniversaries???? Until recently I've never known issue #25 or #75 to be anniversary. Upcoming I'm sure we'll have anniversary specials (with pop-up cover?) of the first time Bruce Wayne zipped his fly. Die-cut, parchment wrapped, foil,....my, my, my. Well, my answer to all of this, is basically the same as yours, spread the money around a bit. I've generally modified my Marvel orders by 25% - 30% (I've heard of one dealer here in NY who cut Marvel by 50%), and DC by 20%. I've kept my Valiant the same, and am being selective as far as Image, depending upon response to first issues (if #1 doesn't go, there is a real problem), putting some money into the impending Dark Horse Universe. Comics selling for $1 (to start), in a field where the comics which sell for $2 25 should be selling for $1 25, represents to me a Universe which needs some support until it can either fold, or establish itself. When I read the Advance Release of the big two (which ones are those), I no longer can look for writer, or artist, or even guest appearance; I look for the gimmick which will surely be there, and then try to decide what to do

So, the question I have to ask is why is all of this happening? The way I see this, is we are caught in a war... each company is trying desperately to either establish itself, or make sure another company doesn't become established, e. g. money spent on Image will not go to Marvel, money spent on Marvel will not go to Valiant, etc. And so, ladies and gentlemen, we're smack dab in the middle of a warzone, in a still very depressed economy, that may just this year, and next, try to awaken itself. So, while I'm looking forward to an intellectually interesting year (who will do what, to whom, with what), but perhaps not a particularly fun year. I can easily foresee Market Reports being divided into Gimmick and Non-Gimmick sub headings, rather than companies or publishing eras. Well, patience, just as the independents had their day in the mid-80's and then faded, so will this, and then perhaps we return to collecting, not collectibles.

Current Stuff: Everyone has a piece of the pie here. Image, when they ever arrive go, go, go...however bombs include Splitting Image, Stormwatch, Mystery Inc., and Supreme...bomb defined as even my subscribers are returning them, and taking these titles off their requests. Spawn continues to be the most constant book. The erratic (?) publishing of issues works clearly to sabatoge any potential success, and doesn't bode well for the future. Valiant remains strong, not so much with current, but with back issues, as more and more people discover the solidarity of the company. Books most constantly requested for upcoming issues, are Turok #1, and the Reign of the Superman series, so this may indicate where the interest lies. DC, as noted from the

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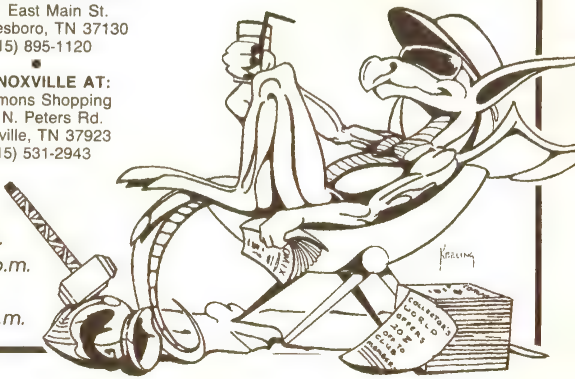

last sentence, is very strong. I expect Superman #500 tomorrow, and will keep the lock on the door. Knightfall series in Detective and Batman are nuggets here: Batman #488 (Azrael) $6, Detective 657 (Azrael) $6, 489 (Azrael) $6, 658 (Azrael) $6, 490 (Bane) $5, 659 (KF2) 6, 491 (Bane) $5, 660 (KF4) $6, 492 (KF 1) $6, Sword of Azrael 1 $20, 493 (KF 2) $6, and Vengence of Bane $15.

. . . ..So somethings going on here. These were all under ordered since Batman was in a somewhat precarious situation, and no dealer tried to maintain any heavy backstock. These are all part of a prologue run, and everyone is sensitized to the prologue prices for Superman. Keep your eye out for them. Marvel (to be frank) is just slogging along, sometimes a cover attracting someone, but with no great interest in any title. X's and the various SMs retain consistency, with no great enthusiasm. The public can be trusted, which is always nice to know.

Recent Stuff Sales: An overview would be to simply present some sales. Magnus #12 $100, spawn #4 (coupon) $20, #5 $10 (that was last week, this week they'd be $5 more each). Superman #66 (which may turn out be a really key issue), about 6 weeks ago $20, three days ago my last one at $40, Shadowhawk #1 $45 Many people are telling me they can't locate Spawn's #4 and #5 anywhere, so don't be surprised at prices beyond those I've quoted. Two points to note in the above synopsis; (1) Marvel is not included in the above, since there is no real interest in recent back issues here, (2) Little gimmicked stuff, with the exception of the couponed issue, but even with them, the purchasers would have taken uncouponed items (at 50% less), so it was the book they wanted.

Silver and Bronze Back Issues: The leader here is Marvel, but overall the back issue market is slow, since recent issues eat up available money. The most popular and demanded book is Spiderman #300. This first appearance of Venom is really a nugget in the dross. Sales include a FN copy at $30, and a VF at $60 (I'd go between $75 and $90 for a NM). ASM #129 (1st Punisher) in FN+ (one rusty staple), went within a day at $150 (and I think that was a bargain). Uncanny X-Men #1, solid GD $325. Note here, that mainly we're talking about Spider-Man, which may well sum who may emerge in the Marvel Universe over the long haul. Always a solid book, it now emerges as the only set of titles which are in demand. So, if you need any and have the money, I believe that this is where to fill in holes quick, quick, quick. Other than that, I see no emerging X trends.

The Big Finish: Now that Overstreet is published monthly, I hope we're able to keep tabs on the pulse of the marketplace more closely. My trip to Europe indicated a clearly depressed market in London and a solid growing market in Vienna. Examples included the bagged Supes #75 ranging from $50-$60, X-Men #212 at $48 ($48?)

On the other hand the market for B&W independents is much more solid there. From what I was told, the German market is going ballistic with gimmicks in much demand there. Any takers for a Market report from there, since the German audience is much into American comics… which can shift an input of money, which in turn can shift prices. It would be interesting to know what is going on there. Young Indiana Jones has returned to TV, and for some reason I love it; it's not very good, but it has a charm, and although some of the stories are stretched, I'm indeed fond of it. If you've not given it a try, do so, and make your own decision. But, no matter what you do....enjoy.....

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Hello again from Southern Indiana. Little has changed since my last report, so this should be brief.

Recent back issues: The demand for Valiants in both mail order and at shows is intense. At my last show in Nashville, TN it was almost a waste of time to bring anything else. I can now also confirm what some other dealers have reported. A number of sportscard shops are moving into comics, and they seem primarily interested in Image and Valient titles. The Nashville show had two card dealers roaming the room looking for stock. These guys are accustomed to fast moving markets and are not afraid to spend significant $$$ on new material. Unlike some of my other market reports, however, I am not going to preach about the high prices some of these books have reached in short period of time. Valiant has done a great job of producing a quality line of comics, and the fans are responding. Sure, there is a lot of speculation, and some books, like Harbinger #1 at $100 seem to have peaked, but there are still a lot of Valiants with room to grow. Recent sales: Eternal Warrior #4 (1st Bloodshot) $15.00, Rai #1 $25.00, #3 $60.00, Shadowman #8 $10.00, Solar #3 (1st Harda) $35.00, #4 $20.00, #5-7 $15.00, #14 (1st Fred Bender) $10.00, #15 $7.50, X-O Manowar #3 $20.00. Other recent books doing well include DC's Vertigo line and Marvel's Ren & Stimpy, the later going quickly in the $10-15.00 range.

Future Picks: DC seems to finally have a hit with their Vertigo line - Death especially. Turok #1 should be a sure thing and X-O Manowar #0 could zoom - one year from now their will be a lot of collectors wondering why #0 is cheaper than #1.

Silver Age: No change since the last report. Still plenty of demand for inexpensive lower grade and true NM, other books often slow unless they are key issues. Demand for 70's material continues to build with each new revival. For those of you who have yet to figure it out, the trick is to buy before the revival and prices go through the roof. That means it is probably to late to buy Son of Satan cheap, but there are lots of other (Black Panther, Champions, Marvel Two-In- One, Inhumans and virtually all DC's to name a few) 70's titles that are still inexpensive.

Until next time, remember - buy what you enjoy and enjoy what you buy.

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Golden Age: Golden Age Comics continue to be very difficult to find, especially in the higher grades. As everyone knows, the supply is limited, and a growing number of collectors are searching for them. Adding to this is the fact that it seems that more and more collectors (investors) are looking for near perfect or perfect books. I receive one or two calls a day from collectors calling cold to buy key DCs and Timelys as well as key Silver Age books.

Lou Fine Books: In addition to DC and Timely, there is a strong demand for comics with Lou Fine art. These are some of the hardest to find books and will always bring a premium over guide.

Best Sellers: I do mail order only and I specialize in books pre-1964. Other than Golden Age, the best sellers from my latest catalog were Amazing Spider-Man #1 thru #25 and Amazing Fantasy #15. Other best sellers are almost any high grade Dells or Gold Keys (especially those relating to TV programs), DCs (Dectective, Action, Adventure, Batman, Superman), and Science-Fiction oriented books.

Most Sought After: Perhaps, the most sought after were the few pre-hero Marvels. These pre-hero Marvels in high grade should move upward rather sharply in the near term.

Other trends: I have noted in my buisiness is an increase in demand for EC comics in all grades and a moderate, but quite steady movement of all Archie related comics. See everyone next issue, and happy collecting.

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Hi there, collectors. Here is my "state of the comic book marketplace" address for the Seattle area, as of early April.

Valiant: Valiant is still on the lips of many back-issue seekers, but the demand has definitely slowed in the last couple of months. Where once, every issue of every Valiant book disappeared immediately from the new issues racks and back issues sold as soon as they were displayed, now it seems most stores have an ample supply of the newer issues around. And back issues of most Valiant titles are still hard to find and very expensive when you do. I get asked most often for the following Valiant books: Rai 3 and 4, Solar 10 and 14, Magnus 12, Harbinger 4 and 5, Shadowman 1 and X-O Manowar 4. Some recent sales: Rai 3 ($55), Solar 10 ($40), Harbinger 5 ($18), X-O ($14)

Other Recent Books: A smattering of other recent books have been hot and much asked-for, including Batman: Sword of Azrael, all 4 issues (#1 sells for $10-15 around here), the Cable miniseries, Ren & Stimpy #'s 1 and 3, and first issues of all the Marvel 2099 books with the exception of Ravage. All Punisher 2099 issues are hot even though other Punisher titles are very dead. Spiderman 2099 #2 will fetch five or six bucks, with the much more common #1 bringing around $4.

Death of Superman stuff: It's fairly slow, except for the Justice League tie-in issues which are still requested occasionally. Next week the Superman titles resume publication and it will be interesting to see how much hoopla surrounds the return of the Man of Steel (or should that be Men of Steel?) I predict there will be much less excitement and media coverage here than accompanied the death storyline, and many stores will get caught with too many copies of Adventures of Superman #500, et al. We'll know by the time you read this.

Other Notes: Here's just a few other notes on recent sales and trends around Rocket Comics: Lots of interest in giant-size comics from the 1960's lately. Marvel annuals aren't doing much but sales of DC 80-page Giants (in any grade) have been strong as well as the Gold Key giant-size books (titles like Quick Draw McGraw Fun-Type Roundup, Huckleberry Hound Chuckleberry Tales, etc.). In particular, demand for the GK paper-cover giants of the

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'60's, has been acute. I've sold a number of lower and mid-grade early Amazing Spiderman's in the last couple of months. For example, ASM #1, GD/VG $850, ASM #2 VG- $300, ASM #33 VF/NM $75. Also a good selection of late 1940's DC superhero has moved for about current guide prices, most of it in around VG condition. Titles like All-Flash, Detective, Green Lantern, and others. Interestingly enough, Avons seem to be drawing some notice, for the first time in a long while. I've recently sold some issues of Eerie and some of the science fiction one-shots, like Robotmen of the Lost Planet and Attack on the Planet Mars. These had been gathering dust in the shop for a couple of years.

That's about it for this time. Overall, back issues continue to move reasonably well, especially considering how much new product continues to appear to soak up the collector dollar. We're looking forward to the summer months for sustained and hopefully increased sales activity

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Greetings (Hi Ya'll) from the wonderful state of North Carolina. With so much coming out in the comic book marketplace, sometimes it's hard to keep track of everything, but we'll give it a try...

Recent: Valiant! Valiant! Valiant! Where did they come from? Yesterday they were a nobody. Today you can't keep them boogers on the shelves. All titles are selling well for three times guide, and there seems to be no end in sight. Herbinger seems to be our hottest seller so far .. But watch out for Turok!

Image titles are slowing down, but still very hot! Spawn, of course, is in the lead, followed by Shadowhawk (#1 sells for as high as $20), The Pitt, Youngblood, The Maxx, and Cyberforce. All others are average sellers (nothing big)

Marvel: What can I say? Our biggest seller! 70% of all new comic sells are Marvel. And, with the birth of the X-Men animated series, X-Men lead the pack. X-Force and Uncanny aren't far behind. As far as others go, both Avenger titles slow (dead title for new and back issues). Same for Alpha Flight, Daredevil, Conan, Dr. Strange, Excaliber, Iron Man, Hulk (except for a select few issues), New Mutants, The Nam, Namor, Silver Sable, and Sleepwalker. Other slowing Marvels: Classic X-Men, Captain America, Fantastic Four, Darkhawk, Marvel Comics Presents, Nomad, Night Stalkers, New Warriors, Darkhold, Moon Knight, Silver Surfer, Punisher War Journal, Quasar, Guardians of the Galaxy, Thor (but watch for increase due to New Thunderstrike), and Warlock and the Infinity Watch.

Hot Marvels: X-Men, X-Force, Wolverine, all 2099 titles (except for Ravage) are extremely hot. All Spidey titles are very good sellers with the exception of Web of Spiderman. Venom is an extremely good seller (one of our best). Spiderman Unlimited sold out in two days. Remember, it's Maximum Carnage Part 1. Punisher sells well as a back issue, but new sales are slowing down; Punisher War Zone being the same.

Other hot titles: Ghost Rider, Spirits of Vengeance and Morbius (with Morbius being the more popular of the three).

DC: (understandably). The only death that happened with DC are the sales. The bagged Superman #75 sold well at first for $40 now it sells slowly at $15. Batman sales are folding up their little wings. All other DC titles being non-existant in sales.

1970s And Early 1980s Marvel: Is still the biggest on the block. Amazing Spiderman being the highest in demand, #129, (First Punisher) is our strongest seller, followed by Hulk 181 (first Wolverine). All Ghost Rider's seem to be selling very well, as well as Punisher, Wolverine, and Morbius appearances. DC sales for this time period are just not there.

Silver Age: Marvel is still king here, and Amazing Spiderman is still the top title. Also, Fantastic Four is very hot, the hottest issue being #5, 48, and 50. Avengers, X-Men ..sales o.k., but slow.

DC has a few titles that are okay in this area, such as the Atom, JLA, and Green Lantern.

Moving on to Trading Cards: Non-Sports trading cards are really on the rise, while sports cards are a dying breed. You can tell this by all the sports card only shops suddenly going into comics and non-sports cards. The hottest cards around are obviously Marvel Masterpieces. At $2 a pack, these cards still sell faster than any other card we've ever had. X-Men series II sells very well, but packs and boxes only because everyone's trying to get the Wolverine hologram, which is selling for $40 now.

Other hot cards: Silver Surfer all prism series (but not more than $40) Doomsday, Boris III, Ken Kelly, and of course, Marvel Universe, series I and II.

What's not hot in cards: Suprisingly, Marvel Universe series III, DC series I and II, and Star Trek series I and II.

Well that about wraps it up for this month! See ya next time.

BRIAN & CAROL MORRIS
CB Comics Plus
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Not every town in that virtually straight line between Peoria and Indianapolis happens to be large enough to support a comic shop. In lieu of our own store, we do comic/card sales shows every weekend in a different (usually) working class town or city.

In the almost-a-year (after a three-year layoff) of operation, we've settled into our sales niche: Post Silver Age comic books and non-sports cards. (Baseball? Isn't that the small, white one with the stitching?) Overall, our clientele is fairly balanced between the two poles; "Buying For Entertainment" and "Buying For Investment" which makes this profession very fascinating for us.

As of late, we've enjoyed quite a bit of trading and buying of Post Silver Age material. Rather than take huge gobs of money for books that do (or don't) have any great Guide value, many collectors parlay their purchases into new titles to read and collect. We've also found some Silver Age books in GD/VG condition. We buy these books at reasonable prices (for both parties) and, in turn, our customers purchase these older comics to read stories that contemporary titles use as springboards for new plotlines (and maybe for the "bragging rights" of possessing a gem from the past.

Post Silver Age: Due to the interest sparked by his recent demise, and subsequent resurrection, the Superman titles have risen in popularity. New collectors have discovered the post-Crisis stories and enjoyed the nearly seamless story flow from super-title to the next. "Older" collectors (sorry bout that) immerse themselves in the Julius Schwartz or Mort Weisenger stories of their younger days. The deluxe death issue sells for fifty dollars easily. Given this renewed interest in the Man of Steel, could it be that in these days of foreign unrest, economic uncertainty at home, and the promise of dark times awaiting us all, that more people want to turn to old fashioned values. . such as Truth, Justice, and the American Way?

Batman: The Knightfall storyline and the animated series sparked a resurgence of interest in the Batman titles that Batman Returns almost totally squelched. Batman Adventures sells vigorously to younger readers who aren't ready for the violence level of the regular titles. Rumors of Bane doing away with Bruce Wayne and of Azrael becoming the new Caped Crusader have built up interest in their introductory stories, buying before the price inevitably skyrockets. Despite our offers to buy, speculators are holding on to their copies, waiting for the dust to settle after Batman #500.

The Gals: As for the rest of DC, the George Perez issues of Wonder Woman has seen a slight upturn in fan interest. Perhaps due to the new version's higher visibility of late, older Supergirl (the original version) stories in Adventure Comics, Action Comics, and her own late titles are now being requested.

Star Trek: The comic versions of Star Trek and Star Trek: The Next Generation are experiencing a rise in recent sales, mostly in areas where everyone watches the shows except for the local shop owners who don't have time. All eight parts of The Modala Imperative are in high demand right now. Maybe the licensed properties can't cross over in the company's next big event, but there's still a substantial readership waiting to be served.

Vertigo: Aside from Sandman and the recent Death: The High Cost of Living mini-series, most of the Vertigo titles are poor sellers for us. Despite the fact that DC wants to provide comics for more mature fans of horror fiction, too many of our clientele are wrapped up with the mainstream titles to notice. Although the interest in Sandman issues is high, the prices on the early books are rising higher than some customers want to pay, especially since the stories are in the trade paperbacks. We figure this means that we should always keep the reprint editions in stock, right?

Foil Covers: The recent spate of foil covers (Darkhawk #25, Fantastic Four #374, Amazing Spider-Man #375, Web of Spider-Man #100, Spectacular Spider-Man #200, and Uncanny X-Man #100) are sales hits with readers.

UK Titles: While current American Marvel titles are still popular, and outselling everybody this side of Image, the UK titles move very slowly, despite the frequency (almost every issue!) of mainstream guest stars. Even Death's Head II is slipping, saleswise, for us. Perhaps if Marvel USA would acknowledge that these stories are in the mainstream continuity, could sales increase by giving consumers the feeling that these stories are really important to their favorite characters?

2099: The hottest contemporary series Marvel produces, for us, is the 2099 line. Spider-Man 2099 sells fabulously, due to the great work done by the David/Silvestri/Williamson team. Doom 2099 is a close second in sales. Advance interest is high in the new X-Men 2099 title. Fans enjoy the idea of getting

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in on the ground floor of a new universe (so to speak). Prices run higher on the first issues (around five bucks each) and we can sell the books as fast as we acquire them.

Nova, Star Wars, Rom, Punisher: The old Marv Wolfman Nova series is generating some back issue heat. Star Wars series now sells decently again, interest being stirred by the recent Dark Horse series and the usual rumors of George Lucas doing another trilogy (we'll belive that when we see it!) Rom, Mister Space Toaster himself, is also staging a comeback of sorts. Hey, the stories were entertaining and many decent artists worked on the book (Sal Buscema, Steve Ditko, Bob Layton, Craig Russell, etc.) and some good guest shots are easy to find. The Punisher books still sell well.

Spider-Man: Of the Spider-Man titles, Amazing and the non-adjective title sell easily while Spectacular and Web have slowed down. However, given David Michelinie's recent revelation in another magazine about Web of SpiderMan #18 being the first appearance of a Venom-prototype, a revival of interest in the title could emerge.

Nam, Elfquest, Conan: We seem to have encountered a number of Viet Nam veterans who have discovered The Nam, including one gentleman who really served in the same division featured in the comic. From talking to these people, Marvel could fill another 84 issues with their stories. On the other side of the cultural coin, the Epic Elfquest has generated some new interest from younger, female readers. This market is so ripe for serving that we make certain that we carry as much of EQ as possible. Conan the Barbarian will always sell it Barry Windsor-Smith does the artwork, but lately the John Buscema issues have picked up in popularity. Perhaps the key is that most of the aforementioned titles are well-crafted and still affordable for a lot of non-speculative buyers.

New Mutants, X-Factor: On the flip side, New Mutants has dropped in popularity, even the Rob Liefeld issues. Although new X-Factors still sell well (and I doubt the sales will slip much with Peter David's departure, given replacement writer Scott Lobdell's sales record with Uncanny X-Men), back issues are slow to move. While X-Force still sells better than most Marvel titles, the action on the Mark Pacella run has diminished.

Valiants: To no one's suprise, Valiants still sell well. While Harbinger still creates some reader interest, the first four issues have gone up in price so much that many people don't want to spend that kind of money, especially with a second pressing of the trade paperback due. We don't seem to be able to keep X-O Manowar, Bloodshot, Rai (pre-Future Force) or the early issues of magnus or Solar in stock. Also, purchasing these issues is getting more difficult since speculators know they can get near-Guide prices for the books from most dealers, and they're holding out. Interest is high in the new Secret Weapons title and for anything with Master Darque right now.

Image: Any company's sales would be hurt if they couldn't get their product to the newsstand on a timely basis. However, this doesn't seem to faze Image all that much. Spawn flies out of the sales bins as fast as we can put it in. Cyberforce, Savage Dragon, Shadowhawk, Wild C.A.T.S. and the Youngblood titles are still in heavy demand. We hear complaints about the Liefeld books, along the lines of "Why is he introducing all these new titles when he doesn't seem able to get the flagship book put out on time?" Hopefully, Image's new resolve to be more timely will result in even higher sales on both new books and back issues. Many people still eagerly await Wetworks, from the comments we hear at shows.

Wildstar: Sky Zero, Splitting Image, Stormwatch, Darker Image and 1963 have been well-accepted. New titles from Mike Grell, Keith Giffen and Jack Kirby (definitely NOT in that order!) also keep Image interest at a fever pitch.

Dark Horse: The main draw for our people are, naturally, the licensed properties; mainly Predator, Aliens and The Terminator all do well as new material, and as back issues. Despite an easy-to-find trade paperback, the three-issue Batman Vs. Predator heats up our sales at almost every show. Only the Robocop books do not sell through for us.

In The Card Market: Demand is starting to level off for the Doomsday cards, implying the saturation of the local market. The Marvel Masterpieces literally sell themselves! Then again, the boxes are getting a bit expensive so acquiring new stock from other dealers would price the cards out of our ball-park. Still, we get a steady supply from collectors with spare cards to trade or sell, and thank goodness for it! The new Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtle III boxes just hit the market. The packs sell well, but in a month or so (when collectors begin searching for the cards to plug up the gaps in their sets) we'll start to see some serious action for the single cards. The special artist cards should go well with older, more comic art-conscious collectors.

Whew... And Finally: Does everybody remember the demand for Superman #75 that none of us could adequately fill? Remember hearing stories of the competition who pulled reserve copies of the book to charge more than the cover price to strangers off the street? By the time this is read, the Men of Steel will be off and flying. Regardless of whether we order enough, too many or just right, it's how we treat our regular customers NOW that will determine how many of us will be around further down the road. While very few of us can really be prepared for Big Events such as this, it's how we handle these situations that will bond our customers to us. Do we treat them fairly, or do we go for the quick buck? Personally, I'd rather miss out on squeezing a customer too hard right now, in favor of keeping that business in my store every week for the rest of his/her life. Think of this as comic industry Darwinism.. only the future thinking retailer will survive! May the summer bring pleasant weather, steady sales, and good fortune to us all! Take care!

HOWARD HARRIS
Greg's Comics
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Howdy! It's been over a year since I've managed a comic book shop, but I'm delighted to be back in the swing, now managing Greg's Comics here in sunny Mesa, AZ. We've been open for two months and I've spent the last year preparing for the shop opening and attending conventions in CA.

Image: This the big seller here. Hotter than a firecracker. All titles sell well, but they are consistently led by Spawn. This book looks fantastic month after month and the fans respond accordingly. Wildcats is a close second when they come in. Back issues sell rapidly, fetching the following prices: Spawn #1 $8; #2,3, and 5 $5; #4 $10; Cyberforce #1 $9 50; Wildcats 1 $3.50; Youngblood #1 $12; Brigade #1 $5; Shadowhawk 1 $18; & Pitt #1 $3.

Marvel: X-Men and Uncanny X-Men are the top sellers, with X-Men slightly ahead of Uncanny. Ren & Stimpy are extremely strong. All Spider-Man titles featuring Carnage and Venom sell well, as does the new Venom book. Books with special covers continue to sell well, despite their abundance. The market for Marvel back issues is slow, with only a few exceptions: Ren & Stimpy 2 $20 - doesn't matter which version; Ren & Stimpy 2 $15, 3 $10, 4 $6; Uncanny X-Men 266 $30; New Mutants 98 $12. X-Men 1-20 sell well, but Uncanny issues under 200 are slow with the exception of 94 and Giant Size 1. X-Force and X-men adventures sell moderately well.

Valiant: New issue sales slow to moderate, with Harbinger leading the way. Back issue sales are better than new issue sales. Demand is led by Solar 14, the first appearance of the character who will become Doctor Mirage at $20. Rai and X-O Manowar back issue sales lead the way among other titles. Archer & Armstrong back issue sales are consistently improving.

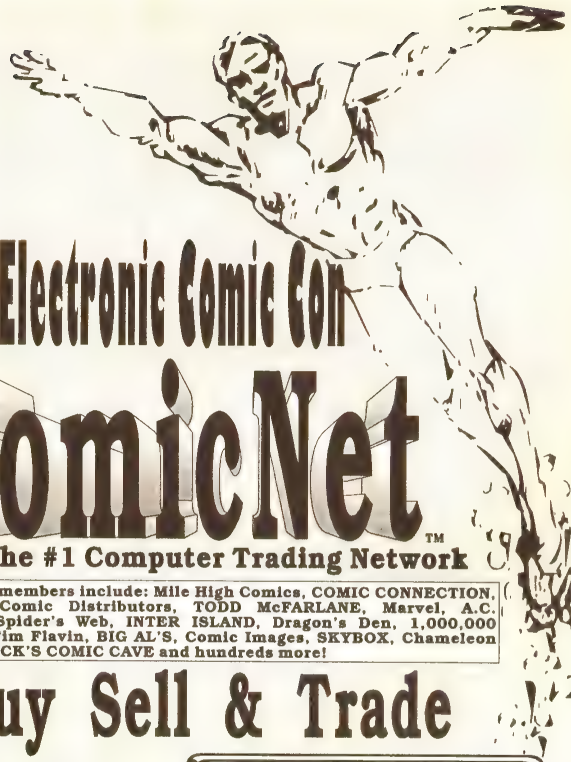
DC: The only recent action here is in Batman and Superman titles. I expect great sales on Adventures of Superman 500 - customer interest is running high. Batman sales on recent issues have surged with people enjoying the Knightfall storyline and anticipating the maiming of Batman. Interestingly, his miniseries and all of his appearances are running high

Silver Age: Amazing Spiderman once again leads the way, followed by Tales of Suspense. Marvels sell well in general in any grade, while DCs usually sell well only in the higher grades unless they are key issues. The exception is lower grade copies. I have 40 boxes of Marvel, DC, Dell and misc. books priced at either $1 or $5 and these books sell like crazy. ACG, Dell (losts of interest in Turok), Gold Key, and Atlas horror books all sell consistently

Los Angeles: One word best describes the L.A. convention market: Valiant! Without Valiant back issues or high grade silver age, you might as well stay home. Here are some common prices we get easily in LA: Harbinger 1 $125, 4 $50, Eternal Warrior 4 $20; Solar 1 $25, 10 $55, 14 $20; Rai 1 $35, 2 $25, 3 $75, 4 $75; X-O 1 $35, 4 $40; and Magnus 12 $100. Silver Age sells well in LA, especially in high grade. It will also sell well in low grade if it is graded conservatively and priced fairly. Lower grade Silver Age sales include: ASM 2 VG $500; Hulk 2 VG $225; and Silver Surfer 1 VG $90.

Marvel #1s: There is also interest in the Marvel #1s from the sixties that are still reasonably priced. Over the last year we've sold at least 10 copies each of Nick Fury 1, Iron man 1, and Submariner 1 in various grades. High grade Marvels from 1963 and before, High grade DCs, and high grade Atlas regularly sell for anywhere from 1.35X to 2X guide.

This weekend is the grand opening celebration for the store, so next month I will have a whole new batch of sales data. See you then and thanks for reading!



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The comics industry has three key buzzwords that are floating around right now. They are as follows: Image, Valiant, and Batman. The first two are no real suprise seeing as they have been there for the last couple of months, but the last item on that list is a new addition More on that in the report. Let's start with new comics.

DC (more like Batman): The reason that I list them first this time is because of the sudden increase in interest in all of the Bat-books. The reason for this is simple, the upcoming Batman #500. Rumor has it that in this issue Batman will either A) go mentally insane, B) become physically incapacitated, or C) will be killed. I look for it to be either choice A or B on account of the recent Superman fiasco. Denny O'Neil has also said that on the death rumor that " we have something far worse than death in store for Batman." The rumor-caused hype for this issue is seriously increasing all demand on the Bat-titles, especially the 22 part Knightfall series which is leading into Batman #500 I expect interest to go nowhere except up. Expectation is also high around here for this coming Friday when Adventures of Superman #500 arrives with the return of Superman. People are also talking about the four new Supermen that will be appearing in three week's time. Which one will it actually be? I guess the kid. The only other new DC books that sell come under the Vertigo imprint which has been rather successful

Image: These brat pack artists continue to sell very well on the newstands. Wildstar #1 finally came in and it sold very well, as did The Maxx #1, Darker Image #1, and Stormwatch #1. Spawn #9 sold very well, as does every other issue of that series. It also happened to be the best written issue of the entire run so far, which I don't find too suprising since Neil Gaiman wrote it. Spawn is easily the best selling Image title, and, scratch temple, also the only one which seems to come out on a regular basis. Maybe this punctuality thing does matter To put it simply, everything that has that funky little Image "i" in the upper corner sells in large numbers, hands down, regardless of title Be ready for Lee's Deathstrike #1, All I have to say otherwise is look out for Deathmate.

Valiant: Still blazing hot after all this time, mainly because of their key asset, consistency. Friday will be the day of reconciliation for Turok, as #1 comes out after all of this fanfare and hoopla surrounding him for months now. Fear not though, it will sell well. Magnus #25 came and went, and I must note that it was a nicely done book All of the Valiant books sell well, because of that commitment to good quality storytelling Be ready for Secret Weapons #1 and also (once again) for Deathmate

Marvel: Still a force to be reckoned with, but nowhere near the juggenaut that it used to be. All Spider-books still do well, as do the mutant books, but just because there is the Marvel imprint on the book doesn't mean that it will be a blockbuster anymore. X-Men Unlimited #1 will be a hot book. Everthing else Marvel. use your own best logic as to what's hot and what's not. It is the same as it ever was

Independents: Six words for you - Continuity, Rebel, Malibu, Dark Horse, and Tundra. When it comes to independant books, that's all that you need to know If it is not from one of these five companies, it doesn't sell

Recent Back Issue:

Image: All of the books that Image has ever sold on the newstand sell extremely well as back issues. None of them are too expensive seeing as there are just so many of all of them out there, but a few of them do stick out in my mind as being perpetually requested books. The first of those comes in a little group that goes by the name of Spawn #'s 1-5. These books are continually being asked for, and we have been continually selling them at the following prices: Spawn #1 $6, #2 $6, #3 $6, #4 (with coupon) $8, and #5 $4. The other two hot Image back issues are Shadowhawk #1 ($12) and Wild C.A.T.S. #2 (which is a pretty tough book at $8). Some other sales include: Youngblood #1 $6, Savage Dragon #1 $7, and Cyberforce #1 with coupon $6.

Valiant: There are two sudden movers in this division. The first of them is Solar #14 with the first appearance of Fred Bender who will become Dr. Eclipse in this summer's Secret Weapons. It is a decently tough book considering that it was ordered before any of the Unity books came in, and we have been selling them at a steady $15 a pop The next unique Valiant back issue is Harbinger #14 with the first appearance of Stronghold. who will also play prominently in Secret Weapons. We have been getting $8 each for these. Some other recent sales include: Solar #1 $25, #10 $65; Eternal Warrior #1 $11, #5 $11, #6 $7; Archer and Armstrong #2 $12, Magnus #21 $5, X-O Manowar #1 $30, Harbinger #1 (w/o coupon) $30; Bloodshot #1 $6; Shadowman #8 $12; and Ral #0 $15. I only wish that I had a Magnus #12 to sell

Marvel: There's not really too much to report here except that I would charge right at $50 for an Amazing Spider-Man #300 if I had one.

DC: In wake of the Batman frenzy in the new comic market, Bat back-issues have picked up. Sword of Azrael #'s 1-4 are hot books since Azrael might end up being the new Batman. Sales: #1-$12, #3-$6, and #4-$6. Batman #488 is hot as well with the Azrael cover by Travis Charest, and they are going for $6. Some other Bat-sales include: Batman #489 (Bane)- $6, Batman #491-$4, Batman #492-$4, and Vengeance of Bane #1-$12. That's pretty much it on the DC sales end.

Comic Cards: The hot stuff is X-Men Series II wax at about $35 a box and Marvel Masterpiece wax at $100 a box. Be ready for the Topps Star Wars Galaxy cards - they look nice. See you next time.

KELLI STANLEY
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Hello again from mercurial San Francisco! Thanks are due to the Overstreet staff for this terrific "new direction" for the best price guide available On to the report

Golden Age: To make it brief, if I can find a superhero Timely, DC, Fawcett, or Quality it will sell. The rapid price increases on Silver Age and modern comics have turned many discerning collectors back to Golden Age. The only problem is in finding them!

Silver Age: DC is still the byword in this area, though of course, early key issues of Marvel are always in demand. The two best-selling marvel titles are Amazing Spider-Man and X-Men. As usual, high grade and low grade move the quickest, with the mid grades VG and FN proving the most difficult to sell. DCs in all grades and in all titles move out quickly, with Superman, Action, Adventure, and Showcase leading the way Our store has been buying Silver Age and 70s books exclusively for a number of reasons. (1) This is the area of collecting we personally enjoy the most. (2) Most speculators have gone on to new comics and therefore we actively cultivate the collector's business. (3) With so much heavy speculation in new comics in the San Francisco area, we wanted to encourage the collection of comics that we feel have a better likelihood of holding their value. (4) Many small card stores and dealers have jumped on the comic bandwagon since the near collapse of the sports card market and many don't seem to know what a Silver Age comic is.

I'm going to such lengths in my explanation because I'd personally like to encourage any collector/reader/investor of new comics to consider collecting Silver Age as an alternative. Don't let the prices scare you! Bargains can still be found! Yes, Virgil/Virginia, there is comic art before Todd MacFarlane!

Recent: Marvel is taking a beating in retailer confidence with its constant bombardment of new, expensively priced titles. Enough is enough! I spoke with many retailers from across the country recently at a business gathering, and everyone was slashing Marvel orders right and left every month. This is bad news for "The Big M" A #1 Marvel used to mean a guaranteed number of sales: Not any more! Once popular titles like the Punisher and Silver Surfer are losing ground every month. Gimmick covers, less pages, and a $2.95 or $3.50 price tag are not pleasing developments to recession ridden San Franciscans.

I think the prize for biggest flop of the year goes to the entire Marvel UK line. Mys-Teck War, anyone? The House of Ideas had better come up with some, and fast, because Valiant and Image are eroding its market (and Continuity and the Malibu Ultraverse will continue to do so). DC is holding and has finally succeeded in attracting Sandman readers to other mature oriented books.

Of course, the DC story right now is Batman 500 and the Knightfall story line. These books are selling faster than early Doomsday issues did! Back issue prices are rising faster than a flash flood. Yes, Adventures of Superman 500 will sell - but will Batman's worse than death fate detract from Man of Steel's publicity?

Personally, I think The Return of Superman was over ordered by most. Time will tell. Valiant and Image are slipping slightly - moreso Valiant. Youngblood, Brigade and Supreme - the plethora of Liefeld titles are dropping in sales, though Spawn remains ever popular. Mystery Inc 1963 sold about 30% of what Image usually sell for and of course sold more to a Vertigo type reader than Image type collector. I'm beginning to think Valiant's day in the sun is over The companies to watch are Continuity and the Malibu Ultraverse. Both have some great talent working for them (Neal Adams and a whole gang of really good writers and artist, respectively) Watch for 'em!

Addenda: Gold Key movie and TV comics, Little Lulu, EC horror, Vampirella's, Mad Mags, and Classics Illustrated are all very strong, dependable sellers here. Check 'em out for something different than superheroes!

Well that's it. Remember - if you buy what you like - and read what you buy - you always profit! See ya' in the funny papers!

TODD McDEVITT
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Ah springtime! When a young mans thoughts turn to things that hold a special place in his heart. A time for passion and emotion beyond any boundaries he has dared to imagine. A time when priorities are rearranged to accommodate a base urge - no need - that every young gentleman's heart is victim to. A time when questions are asked and the answers are like none they have heard before. Questions like. . . How much is Spawn #1 worth?

I either need a girlfriend or a new line of work. Until one or the other happens, let's get to the market reports.

Old Stuff: By personal virtue, I have decided that for a comic to qualify as old it must be older than I am. I am 24 years old. I get this odd pain in my soul when a kid comes in asking for old Spider-Man issues and he means the McFarlane books. The popular argument is that they ARE old to a young kid Therefore, using this definition with myself, any comic 25 years or older (Pre-Todd Age) is old. Now that I have established this nonsense, all I have to say about Pre-Todd comics is that I haven't bought any in so long I forget what they look like. My last Golden Age collection has been history for months now. In Silver, all I have acquired is a few small stacks from other dealers and convention attendees. I sound like I'm complaining, but for the most part I have more Silver than I can sell. I recently wholesaled all my Dell books and my nth stock of Silver Age. The next guy who walks in to sell stuff is in for a sad story. Most importantly, old books aren't selling like they used to for me. Most customers ask me what I have picked up recently. When I tell them nothing, they are not interested in scanning what I already have. The same seems true for most other retailers in my area. I have been looking for a few specific old books for customers and when I find them, most dealers are happy to wholesale me what they can. My latest gimmick has been to liquidate my Silver multiples by putting them on special in the stores for dirt cheap prices. Frighteningly, they usually sit for a while before someone bites.

New Stuff: Or Post-Todd Age by my previous definition. Here's where the action is. I have bought tons of new books, but my sales of new material have gone nuts. Part of the reason is that my prices reflect my quantity of a book. I am going to be selling Wild C.A.T.s #1 for $2.00 for a lonnnnnnng time. And every collection I buy has another one in it so that price will stay constant for even longer. I've been in stores selling New Mutants Annual #5 for $20 I charge $4. I tell these guys to lower the price, sell it, and I'll wholesale them more. My point is not to criticize retailers (at least not this time Jeff), but to prove that back issues sell well when priced well. With the tremendous amount of the past ten years (or so) worth of titles available, I don't think there is any reason to charge a ton for these books. The newer it is, the easier it is to find. Take Valiant for example... everyone seems to think they are the hottest and rarest things in the industry. I can find them everywhere! People want insane prices for them so they sit on shelves collecting dust - eternally on sale, but with nobody buying.

Marvel: My stores heat up quicker when the sun reflects off of all the foil that now graces my shelves. People complain about it, but I still double my sales on a title sporting this invading trend. As a retailer, that's all I care about. I'm worried about it when the fans stop the lip service and actually stop buying such gimmicks. Fans definitely are not falling for the "I have to buy two to keep one mint" philosophy that used to be displayed on bagged issues.There's too much other new stuff out here for fans to afford double of it. Buy one. Open it. Read it. Enjoy it. Recycle the bag. The earth is your friend.

Huge hits from Marvel have been Cable, Maximum Carnage, and Venom. Not a single day goes by that I don't sell Ren & Stimpy. And I don't mean for outrageous prices. Customers want to read - yes, it's true - read this great book and only might care about what the air fouler smelled like. I usually find some hideous perfume or dead animal to compare the stench to and they are satisfied. It's cheaper to buy a bag of kitty litter than to pay what some dealers charge for a card with the same scent!

DC: Vertigo is steadily gaining ground, but many fans are having a hard time taking the plunge (pun intended) to sample this great imprint. They want to know what it's about and you can't tell them and translate an accurate description. The only way to convince them of the quality they possess is to have them sample one. The biggest mistake potential fans make is flipping through a Vertigo book and passing judgment on it. "It didn't look good." The Pitt looks good, but reading it makes me wish I had decided on another profession.

I am writing this just before the Reign of the Supermen starts. So far, I have had many requests for the story, but it has been nothing like his death. Only time will tell. The Knightfall storyline is gaining interest, but it hasn't hit me as big as it has in other areas of the country. Wonder Woman is picking up new readers with the introduction of Lee Moders terrific artwork. Don't pass this one by. #72 was his start on the book.

Valiant: When Valiant started, they encouraged fans to pick up ALL of their titles to enjoy an entire universe. There was a time that was easy, but with them producing new titles steadily, its getting as hard for readers to keep up with Valiant as it was for Infinity crossovers. New readers have a hard time jumping on the Valiant bandwagon with strong continuity linking new issues with older, now outrageously priced back issues. And I think that Valiants insistence on not reprinting is STUPID. Rai #0 links everything in the Valiantverse together and is important to recent plots, but customers really aren't curious enough to pay $15 for it. Such an important keystone book should be kept in print to satisfy potential Valiant readers. And what about the rare issues of Rai #3 and 4? There are people who would like to read them, but are not going to invest the crazy money dealers want for them. My sales on Rai and the Future Force hurt because customers knew how impossible it was to go back only 8 issues worth of material. Why does Valiant seem to not want these new readers? I want to sell tons of their books, but customers give up when they see how expensive it would be to backtrack if they like what they read, so they don't even bother sampling it. I would rather sell 100 copies of Rai #0 (2nd printing) for $2.50 than 7 copies for $15.

Image: I think I have received an Image book for several weeks in a row now! Could these guys be getting their act together? I hope so. These books sell much better when they are on some sort of schedule. I just got notice from my distributor that Image is taking returns on many late titles. That sounds like something a publisher would do! With this display of concern about late books, Image may be on the right track. They won't want to take returns on books, so they have an extra incentive to get their product out on time. I'll take that as a trade off. The most ignored Image book has been 1963. With a great creative team that should tap the Vertigo market and an annual teaming 1963 with the current Image heroes, this is a book that every comic fan should want. Unfortunately, the McFarlane and Lee fans will not realize how important the 6 - issue 1963 series is until the annual is released. This oversight may make 1963 the last high priced Image back issue - get it now!

Premium Books: I have to at least touch on this rising trend. My stomach churns when I go to conventions and see a display board boasting Batman #1, Fantastic Four #1, and Hard Corps Gold #1. These books barely belong in the same room together! The premium books that publishers produce are artificial collectibles They are supposed to be rare, but everyone has them. I'm sure I can find a better way to spend $500 than on a Platinum Superman #75. How about buying a Silver Age book? I can remember when the Platinum Spiderman #1 came out and sold for that much. Now it sits for less than $200. And I've got news for you. Marvel is still giving them away! What bothers me the most is that this trend has only one direction to go to next. As a retailer, I will be offered premium books from the publisher. Marvel has taken the first step by charging us for Venom Gold #1. As a retailer, I couldn't refuse. This book was intended to retail for $29.95. Have you seen any at that price? I would be a fool not to buy several copies of any premium book if they were offered to me, even for insane prices. I hate this fact, but it is true.

And Finally: Brace yourself kids. We're in for another record breaking summer. Please check out my article in CBM Forum (elsewhere in this issue) to see how records are being broken already. Also I need to get the word out that I do NOT do mail order. I sell comics as inexpensively as possible to serve my local clientele. I would not be able to do that if I made them available via mail order so please don't call or write requesting mail order. I appreciate your understanding in this matter. However, if your passing through Pittsburgh... See you next issue

BRIAN POWELL
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Howdy from Kentucky and on to the report.

Silver Marvel: Most requests are for Amazing, FF, Keys, most main titles #1-50. Lower grades move too! Sales: Spidey 15 FN $150; #21 VF $150; FF #48 GD $60; Tales of Suspense #39 VG $450. Acquisitions: FF #1 GD, But 2 pages out, Hulk #1 GD (3/4 cover); Avengers #1 VG/FN (Tape Spine).

Silver DC: Often requested, seldom found in nice shape. Sales: Hawkman #1 VG $75, Action 254 FN $60. Acquisitions: GL #1 GD, #2 FN/VF.

Dell & Gold Key: Many requests on high grade Hanna-Barbera cartoons. Atom Ant, Jonny Quest, Secret Squirrel, and Astro Boy are getting tough! Sales: Yellow Submarine VG (no poster) $25, Acquisitions: Still sorting a nice batch of TV/movie comics. F-troop, I Spy, Rat Patrol, Garrison's Gorillas.

Golden Age: Lower grade hero comics prevail. Acquisitions: 40+ Fiction House in "fine" range, mainly jumbo.

Image: Sales: Wildcats 1, Gold, Signed $120. Short and sweet but there it is. Thanks for reading and happy collecting.

GARY REITMEYER
Never Ending Tale
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Hello again, and welcome to the second issue of Overstreet's Comic Book Marketplace. Here's what's been happening since last time.

New Books: Marvel still leads the pack, the gimmick, chrome plated, glow in the dark, die cut, fold out, scratch and sniff covers are getting tired but they are still selling well. Heres a long range pick; Spectacular Spider-Man #200. This book is one of the best comics I have read in along time with no mindless punch ups, just some old friends trying to figure out what has gone wrong with their relationships over the years. If you have ever read Amazing Spiderman 121 and 122 you know what I mean. Last report I told you great stories and art make a book desirable, this one has both.

The Batman Nightfall story line is kicking up quite a stir and the Azrael books are blazing hot and moving briskly at $10 a pop already. Is DC going to kill Batman? ($$$$) Or just break his back. Get these books when they come out because they are going to vanish as soon as they hit the stands. The Vertigo books are all doing good, not huge numbers, but very steady sales with new readers joining in all the time.

Image books sell very large numbers, but most of these books are being sold at way below cover price. Spawn is the exception, these books are being bought by collectors and whether you like the stories or not, this is far and away the best art work Mr. McFarlane has ever done. Valiant, same as always, new books sit for a few months, then they become the hottest back issues around. Just one small word of advice, some of these books are actually being called "rare", namely Rai 3 & 4. These books are not rare, just expensive (in the New York area anyhow). A rare book is one that, regardless of how much you offer to pay, you cannot locate a copy. As an experiment, offer a dealer $150 for a Rai 3 or 4 and see how many copies of these "rare" books turn up. Try this little experiment with Showcase 55 in NM and you will see what I mean.

1970s Stuff: I have now had 2 requests for NM sets of Night Nurse 1 through 4 at double guide (about $16). I may have started a run on these books and we may all end up in a bidding war on them at Sothebys soon. Recent sales include Champions 1 $15, a NM Savage Tales 1 $75 (by the way, this is the 1st Man Thing, not Adventures into Fear 10), Various issues of Fantastic Four from 125 - 175 at guide prices.

The Avengers/Defenders crossover in Avengers 115 - 118 and Defenders 8 - 11 are heating up, Thor is one of my better selling titles with issues in the low 200's moving best

Silver Age: I think it is time to introduce a new grade to the system. This new grade would be caillled "the best copy I have ever seen". I'm not quite sure where it should fall... between VF & NM or FN & VF... but it sure is used to describe MOST of the Silver Age books around here. Some recent sales include Daredevil 10 NM $110 and FF 59 NM $35 Low grade runs of Avengers 6 - 15 GD and X-Men 22 - 32 GD at 30% below guide. Also Star Spangled War Stories 51 VF $25.

Cheap, hard-to-find books: Atlas (Seaboard) Comics from the 70's. Titles like Iron Jaw, The Destructor, Planet of the Vampires, Moorlock 2001, The Brute, and my personal favorite, the Scorpion by Howard Chaykin. Once again, most of these books can be had for a buck or less, it the finding that's fun...

That's all she wrote. My best to everyone.

Rich Conley
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San Antonio, TX 78218
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Welcome back to Overstreet's CBM! We're glad to be a part of the information network of market advisors and hope all of you find some useful and interesting information in this report. As of this writing I have just opened up a Collector's Gallery at our Austin Hwy address to be able to better serve the serious comic collector in his search for Silver Age and Golden Age items. The initial response has been very positive and I hope to write a special report on this project at a later dat. For now, let's get on with our up-to-the-minute Market Report...

Golden Age: We seem to be saying about the same thing that all other Golden Age dealers are saying, "I don't know to whom nor to where it disappears, but as quickly as we get pre-1960 material ready for sale it is gone!" While this is a bit of an exaggeration, most Golden Age books sell well at near-guide prices. There seems to be a high-demand slot price of $75-$200 per piece that sells faster than lower or higher priced items (I have often thought about lowering $250 items to the 200 price-tag or raising $55 pieces to $75 to see if this theory is sound).

Aquisition: Last month we acquired two nice Golden Age collections One was primarily mid-grade DCs with a few Timelys (such as Human Torch 25-30, Marvel Boy 1, Amazing Comics 1, Complete 2, and Marvel Mystery 82-92)

Sales: The Timely books sold more quickly than the DCs, even though the DC run included All-Star 20-38, Batman 16-52, and World's Finest 3-40. As of this writing there are only bits and pieces of this collection still available None of them were of exceptional condition, and none of them brought exceptional prices

The most interesting deal was the trade of the marvel Boy #1 (+ a few other pieces) to another Overstreet Advisor, Bruce Ellsworth (of Bruce's Comics in Santa Fe, NM), for the first three Sgt Rock Issues of Our Army at War (#81-83) at the Dallas Fantasy Fair in March. All three issues of OAaW were sold within two hours of our trade being finalized.

Aquisition: The second Golden Age collection we acquired consisted primarily of Katy Keene Comics, ECs, Classics Illustrated Originals, and a few Fiction House issues.

Sales: Raymond True picked up many of the nicer Classics within days of our acquisition, and nearly all of the rest were sold within four weeks. Titles such as Jungle & Jumbo, that were considered "boat anchors" just a year or so ago, sold in quick fashion. I believe that the "bottom line" to the Golden Age Market is that we have experienced a broadening demand for vintage books, without seeing a clear cut HOT Title, Character, or Publisher. Collectors are realizing the futility of completing runs of any Golden Age title, and are buying books that appeal to them - regardless of any previous interests. Our biggest "surprise" sale was that of the three Motion Picture Funnies Weekly Cover Proofs (2-4) at the full $600 guide price within the first week of them being offered

Silver Age: In talking with other Silver Age Dealers, we must just be lucky! Last month alone we picked up five collections, all of which included such keys as FF 5 & 48, Spiderman 14 & 50, and Strange Tales 115. Without exception, the high grade (VF or better) copies of these books brought over-guide prices. FF #5 VF/NM sold for $1400 and Spiderman #14 NM brought $1250. Non-key books in high grade sold very quickly, but the mid-grade/mid-numbered (MG/MN) books (eg. FF 51-99, Spiderman 51-93, Tales of Suspense 60-99, etc. in less than FINE) are still sitting around in all of our stores awaiting an interested buyer. Even though we price VG copies of mainline titles (Spiderman, Tales to Astonish/of Suspense, X-Men and others) at GD prices (10-15%) of NM, they move out very slowly. We have had more luck selling these books through the mail into markets such as Hawaii and Alaska where collectors say that our prices are "too good to pass up."

Silver Age DC books have not been as easy to acquire, but the same demand phenomena exists. Keys and high-grade/mid-numbered books gather dust. We have been carrying MG/MN copies of Aquaman, Atom, Hawkman, Metal men, and Metamorpho around for years and years and years... Recent exciting sales include the previously mentioned Our Army at War 81-83 which sold at 1.5 X guide.

Other Silver Age books continue to sell well, with the supply unable to meet demand. Our inventory of Gold Keys, Dells, Charltons, Archies, and pre-hero Atlas/Marvel titles keeps shrinking, and we have little hope that we can rebuild it to what it had been like only a few short years ago.

Post Silver Age: As I looked into our back issue stock to write this report, I noticed a lot of missing titles and issue numbers. Previously difficult-to-sell material was noticeably absent from our back issue bins. Kirby material, such as the Eternals, Forever People, and Kamandi had disappeared. Non-super-hero books like Conan (below #50), Warlord (below #42) and Plop! were not to be found. And the Warren magazine, Vampirella, is starting to appear on our Customers Want Lists. The material we had been spending most of energy to acquire (Deathlock, Ghost Rider, Morbius, Punisher, and Wolverine appearances) was still in ample supply. I suspect that the differences in the per-unit prices between these books had something to do with the disappearances of the former.

Our customers are actively looking for the next big hit from the Post-Silver-Age. Most prevalent on their want lists are: Green Lantern 87, Amazing Spiderman 194, 204-205, and X-men 100-101. Titles from this era that are NOT selling in San Antonio include Marvel Team-Up & Two-in-One, Defenders, The Champions, and Phantom Stranger

Recent: Early 1992 belongs to Valiant. Initial issues of Magnus, Harbinger, Solar, and X-O Manowar continue to be in high demand at prices well over guide. Releases over the past few months, however, have not sold very well. For example, we still have several hundred Bloodshot #1s from our original order. We feel we made a mistake by setting a limit of one-per-customer when the book first shipped. We decided to NOT limit Magnus #25, but still have too many copies of this issue unsold. We significantly cut back on Valiant quantities effective

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Mid 1992 belongs to Malibu/Image. Spawn continues to sell very well both as a new book and as a back issue and we continue to search for copies of #1 thru #5. Even though there may be millions of each of these books in print, collector demand remains very strong, with numbers 1, 2, 3, and 4 all selling for $9 each and #5 bringing $5. Only one other Image title remains a strong back issue seller; WildC.A.T.S. - with #1 selling for $5 and #2 bringing $3. Pitt, Wildstar, and Stormwatch are the hottest of the new Image releases. Thank goodness for our Distributor's willingness to accept returns of the late books. We sent back over 5,000 copies of Shadowhawk, Savage Dragon, Youngblood, and Cyberforce because the demand for these books dropped by as much as 85% from the first issue to the second and subsequent book. I don't know if it is a statement about the timeliness problem, apathy toward the new comic by speculators, disappointment over the comics' content, or some combination of all of these, but if I were employed by image I'd certainly want to find out and DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT!

Late 1992 was dominated by Superman's death & funeral. We have not experienced a slow down in demand for any of these issues, with the Collector's Edition of Superman #75 still selling steadily at $35. Anticipation is building daily for the Reign of the Supermen series and I expect it to be a big hit for DC. Of even greater interest is the Knightfall storyline. Even though part four just arrived last week, Batman 492 carries an $8 price tag as does #491. the other key players (Bane and Azrael) have had their first appearances turn to gold with the Sword of Azrael issues bringing $10-$12 a piece and Vengeance of Bane selling for $8.

Marvel books have continued to sell very well, although the noise level about them is lower. Venom and the 2099 line have greatly exceeded my expectations. The glitzy covers (X-Men 300, Web 100, Spectacular 200, Amazing 375) may be bearing the brunt of some negative talk, but sales of ALL of them have been phenomenal. Though the UK titles suffered an early demise, and this year's Annuals (with the Rookie Cards) Project looks like bust, the rest of the Marvel line-up is holding up remarkably well against the onslaught of new publishers and titles in the marketplace. The one Marvel we cannot get enough of is Ren & Stimpy (#1, #2, #3 which bring $20, $18, $18 respectively)!

Harris has a hit on their hands with Vamprella, and we expect Cain to be a big hit as well. Topps first two ventures, Dracula and Vlad, continue to be strong. Demand for Innovation's matterial has remained constant, and Dark Horse' Predator vs. Magnus, Race War, and Colonial Marines are also winners. As retailers, we are happy to see that much focus is being put into Content Quality. This will keep the market strong.

Non-Sport Trading Cards: Similar, in many ways, to the increasing demand for comics, Quality Non-sport Cards are gaining an ever-growing base of loyal collectors. These collectors approach the hobby in a much different fashion that the sports card collectors have. They generally want ONE SET of the cards they like, not hundreds of speculative rookie cards. **Their focus is not on how much will this card appreciate, but rather on how much will I appreciate this card.**

Nonetheless, we have seen rapid price moves on some non-sports products, specifically:

Set Name/Series	Set Price	Chase Price	Pack Price
Marvel I	$50	$12	$4
Marvel II	$45	$10	$2
X-Men II	$35	$15/50	$3
M. Masterpieces	$50	$15-25	$3

Older non-sports cards: 1970 & prior cards are getting tougher to find and more expensive to acquire. We sold a Davy Crockett Orange Set in NM/M for $500, a Civil War News Set in NM/M for $650, an unmarked Mars Attacks Checklist Card in NM/M for $175, and a Bat-Laffs Set for $350. It has been much easier to sell complete sets of vintage non-sports cards over the past year than we've ever experienced. We believe that this market is set to explode in the near term.

AND... No soapbox this report, no hot picks of yet-to-be-released books, and no closing words of wisdom. Instead, just an invitation for any of you traveling to San Antonio this summer, stop in and say, "Hi!" I'll be happy to share a cup of coffee and a couple of stories with you.

Until next time, make mine Overstreet!

John Chruscinski
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Hello, and welcome back to another report from sunny South Florida. Being a collector of Golden Age and a seller of Golden Age and Silver Age, the new Overstreet Annual Price Guide holds many surprises. Ourselves as well as our investors were very much pleased at the turn of events shown (especially in lower grades). Let's cut to the chase.

Pre-Golden Age: (And how beautiful it is!) Last week we picked up the covers to Motion Picture Funny Weekly 2-4 as well as New Fun 2. Within 3 days New Fun #2 GD sold for $2200. The covers are too pretty to sell right now and are looking good on our wall.

Golden Age: What a month for collections. They seem to be everywhere for us. A large collection of early Disney Ducks (over 75 books) all in FN or better waddled into the store last week. All the key Four Colors were in high grade VF/NM - all keys sold within 3 days. A collection of Captain Marvel and other Fawcetts (22 books in all) were picked up 3 1/2 weeks ago - only 4 remain. A large collection of Photo Cover Westerns rode into the store 3 1/2 weeks ago. About 1/2 are gone already. Recent Golden Age sales: Whiz 63 VF $75; Captain Marvel Ski Jump Paper Toy NM $50; Flying Captain Marvel Paper Toy NM; $50, All Star 18 GD $125; Adventure 44 VG $600; 52 GD+ $300, 61 FN+ (Rest) $225; Detective 67 (1st Penguin cover) VF $475; and Wonder Woman 22 VF $170.

Other: All mutant books still doing well. Valiant seems to be slowing down - especially Magnus 25. Sales were not as good as expected. Turok #1 is still expected to do well. Image is still holding its own. Maxx seems to be dead while Batman Adventures (from the cartoon) are hard to keep in stock, and X-Men adventures is dragging. Can't wait for Supey's(?) return, expecting big things. Knightfall and Sword of Azrael is kicking "boot". Look for our 4th and possibly 5th store around the corner. We're almost as big as Bill himself. "Til the next CBM, may the Big Bill heavy hand you.

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Welcome, ladies and gentlemen, to the most reliable Price Guide on the market! Our suggestion to information-hungry comic book fans is to analyze all sources of information, then depend on Overstreet's Comic book Marketplace.

Expanding Readership: Comic books seem to be the "cool thing" in these parts. We are seeing growth with kids and adults, from things as disparate as the X-Men and Batman cartoons to news coverage of Superman's return. The terrific thing we're seeing is that young girls are getting interested not only in Archies and Barbies, but are now finding comics through X-men Adventures. It's wonderful these new comic readers are into it for fun and not to "make hay" on the junior stock market. We love it!

Gimmick Covers: Last issue, we reported on the impending demise of gimmick covers, those things that used to be an instant sell-out. We recently did a study of gimmick covers to find their real effect on sales of subsequent issues... and the results are scary. In almost every case, titles utilizing gimmicks lost more readers than they gained. What this says is that not only will shiny covers fail to be a good investment in the long run, but they will have an adverse effect for current releases. Once again, folks, all that glitters is definitely not gold.

Another Market Note: I feel that the huge number of sportscard dealers now selling comics is both good and bad for comics. It's good in that comics are accessible to more people than would normally see them, and any "civilian" exposure to comics is good long-term. The downside is that sportscard dealers tend to sell excusively hot stuff, with little regard for comics' entertainment value. Chances are that many sportscard dealers are not going to be retailing comics once the hot speculator sheen has been tarnished by the greedy. I heartily suggest you buy your sportscards from a card dealer and your comics from a full-service comic book retailer. Nuff said.

As I write this, I'm getting ready to do a live interview on KGO Radio in San Francisco about the return of Superman. Our hope is that we can satisfy the demand for these books at cover price in the hopes that maybe some of the casual buyers will become regular readers. When that happens, we can open their eyes to not only Superman, but other terrific comics like Cerebus, Bone, Hate and others. Now on to the market report ..

Silver Age: The increase in demand for lower grade issues of key books continues, and is possibly a sign of either strained comics budgets or (most likely) a sign that books in GD, VG, and Fine are decent bargains. Titles that continue in strong demand are Amazing Spiderman, Brave & the Bold, early Challengers by Kirby, Fantastic Four, Showcase, and Pre-Valiant Gold key heroes like Magnus, Doc Solar and Turok. Pre-hero Marvels are in solid demand as well. Dell, Archie, and Charlton comics of the 1950s and 1960s are moving too, notably Four Color and cartoon tie-ins.

Post Silver Age: The past couple of months has seen reduced activity here. There are still great values in this period, i.e. Amazing Adventures, Astonishing Tales (sans Deathlok), the short run of Legion of Super-Heroes, early Buscema Conans, etc.

Recent Material: The long run of Valiant at the

top is starting to slow down a bit, with most of the remaining activity in pre-Unity issues. Pre-Unity Valiants all sell 10% to 50% above last CBM... and sell quickly. Image back issues are hard to keep in stock, but we are seeing more coming back in trades than ever before. Spawn is the fastest selling back issue we stock. Recent Marvel sellers include all issues, with Venom, selling substantially above guide (Amazing #298 $40, #299 $28, and #300 $50). Other recent Marvel's doing well are Incredible Hulk (watch #403 rise as Gary Frank becomes the next hot Marvel artist) and Fantastic Four (particularly the last 10-12 issues). DC's top sellers among recent back issues are Sandman, Shade, Batman: Legends and Batman Adventures. The caution with all of these books is that supply is still very steady, so prices will vary up and down on a day-to-day basis. Yes, the market is that fickle

With the onslaught of new comics coming in the late spring through the summer, we are recommending more than ever that fans stick to buying single copies of comics they are reading and enjoying, then drop those titles you don't really enjoy to free up some budget for something new. We recommend readers sampling the coming new universes from Malibu, Dark Horse, and Defiant, as well as trying something fresh like Bone, Hate, Animal Man, or Gladstone's massively entertaining Disney comics. When you do this, you'll be saying "yes" to a diverse comics' market. When that happens, readers will be the ones deciding which comics get "hot" because of content…rather than slick marketing. As we all know, comics don't have to be hot to be really cool! See you next time.

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IRS Denver Collection Report: Greetings from the wild, wild west. The big news in our area is the IRS Denver collection. (mentioned in the last CBM by Michael Dice). Paul and I contacted agent Floyd Leonard, who invited us to see the collection. I flew to Denver three days later, went to the Colorado Revenue Dept. after meeting Floyd, and went down to the sub-basement of the building.

In one part of the basement he had "The Good Stuff" (about 22 boxes). In the other part of the basement, he also had 385 long boxes of comic books. The next three days were spent grading, sifting, and digging though the entire collection.

Contents: After all that time it turned out the contents held more promise than results (there just wasn't much there). No key Golden Age issues at all, and the important Silver Age issues were not in great shape. There was a lot of misc. Donald Duck, Archie, Andy Panda, Dell Four Color If you collect this kind of material, this collection is for you. The really interesting books (and this is scraping) were New Fun #2, 4, and 5, all FR to GD, All-American #17 FR, Batman #3 FR+, Superman #4 FR+, Showcase #3 FR+ and #4 FR-, Lois Lane #1 VG, Jimmy Olsen #1 VG, Green Lantern #1 FR+, and Superboy #1 VG.

Overall Assessment: If you like reading copies of 1940s, 50s, & 60s comics, you'll may want to bid on this collection. If you are a high grade collector or investor, this collection is probably not for you. Now on to the market report

Bruce Ellsworth (left) and Floyd Leonard and a few of the comics from the "IRS Collection".

Golden Age: The overall Golden and Silver Age market is on the upswing. Highly requested in any condition are the Timely's titles Captain America, Sub-Mariner, and Human Torch Other Golden Age frequently requested include All-American #16, Adventure #40 and 73, Batman #1, Detective #1, 27, & 38, Flash Comics #1 and 104, Green Lantern #1, Superboy #1, and Superman #1 These are expensive books yet I get calls for these almost every day. In these times of low inflation and low interest rates, more and more people communicate their interest in investing larger sums of money in quality books. I personally feel that the wisest investment is in high grade, unrestored, Golden Age comics. With the price of Silver Age comics skyrocketing, and upper grade unrestored comics disappearing, now is the time to buy. Recent sales: Batman #27 FN $400, Captain America 51-56 VG $1,000, and Human Torch #8 VG $350

Silver Age: I have just one question… And it is "Will the escalation in prices of DC's Showcase ever slow down?" This is still the most requested title, and Showcase's popularity never seems to wane. Tied for first place for "most requested Marvel" are Amazing Fantasy #15, Spider-Man #1, and Hulk #1. I am constantly being offered multiples of the guide for upper grade Silver Age Marvels and DCs. Recent sales: Spider-Man #1 VF+ $6,500, Hulk #1 VF $4,500, (Spider-Man 1-4 avg. cond. FN- $4,000), Showcase #22 VG $875, #24 FN+ $600, Flash #105 VG $500, and 123 VF+ $600.

Modern Age: Not much happening here Image arrives on time and sells like crazy. The same can be said for Valiant. A message to Marvel: Might I suggest that you spend some extra money to better your writing and art staff in place of the extra expense of polybagging and specialty covers. A little more substance, pleeeease!

Buy the way folks, did you know that the bagged version of Superman # 75 is great for campfire starter?! See you this summer… Caio.

Below: Some of the many boxes containing the "IRS Collection".

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I wanted to begin by thanking Bob Overstreet, Gary M. Carter, and all the staff at CBM for the opportunity to share information and viewpoints in the Market Reports and the letter column. I congratulate all of you on another excellent publication. I would also like to thank those individuals that thought highly enough of Cobalt Comics to recommend us as Overstreet Advisors. I was very flattered by the invitation.

A Little Background: I first began collecting comics about eight years ago. My good friend Paul Rathburn introduced me to an independent title called The Tick. I soon became aware of Silver Age and Golden Age books at a local store called Halley's Comics. The proprietors (John and Susan Bonner) were very helpful in providing answers to many of my questions and making me aware of important reference materials such as the Gerber's Photo Journal Guides. With the help of a business loan from my father and the support of my lovely wife Doris, I began building a modest inventory of high grade books. In the last year and a half we have begun selling books via mail order and at local shows. We are a very small business and therefore quite specialized in only Golden Age and Silver Age material.

One question we are frequently asked is "Do you think this book would be a good investment?" Frequently the books in question as an investment vehicle tend to be Valiant titles or the newest "HOT" issue. These titles are great for the kids in this era, they generate a lot of excitement for upcoming issues, and promote active trading/selling between these young collectors. When I see some issues, especially the Valiant titles, reaching $100 per book or more I begin to question the principal foundation that these prices come to rely on, namely supply and demand. Frequently these inflated prices are created by the consumers themselves because prices are a reflection of what the collector is willing to pay. If you choose to participate in this arena, beware of the new "HOT" titles that may quickly capture the attention of these collectors thereby crumbling the foundation that once supported the prices associated with the titles which were once highly prized by collectors.

So the answer to these investment questions depends on your specific collecting interest. I usually suggest reference materials first, such as the Overstreet Annual Comic Book Price Guide and the Gerber's Photo Journal Guides to Comics. Avoid the media hype and look for a title or run of books that have a proven track record or the potential to provide a decent return on your investment. This approach should provide the collector/investor with satisfactory results with respect to the enjoyment of the hobby as well as a return on your investment. Lets face it, it is also quite a bit of fun to make money. If you can do that while indulging in a hobby you enjoy, then it is hard to go wrong. A prime example for this approach would be a copy of Showcase #55 NM (3/4/65). The guide value for this book in 1990 was $8.00, currently it guides for $120.00. His price is very solid due to the longevity and continued interest in the characters and the genuine scarcity of this book in this kind of condition. Faced with the decision of purchasing this book and a "HOT" title of the same price I would never hesitate to take the near mint copy of a DC key Silver Age book.

A Few Recommendations: If the collector/investor is looking for some books with room for some significant appreciation over the next five years, take a look at some of the DC Silver Age books such as Aquaman #1, Atom #1, Hawkman #1, Metal Men #1, Rip Hunter #1, and Sea Devils #1, as well as their Showcase and Brave & Bold first appearances. These books are significantly undervalued when you compare them to their Marvel counterparts of the same era such as Amazing Spider-Man #1 and Fantastic Four #1 which are approaching the 10K mark and becoming to expensive for the average collector. Collector pressure will turn to these relatively bargain priced issues featuring these characters in their first appearances or the first issues in their own titles. Another book to watch for is Batman #99, the true first Silver Age appearance of the Penguin and also the first Silver Age Penguin cover.

Some Marvel Bargains Too: If you are a Marvel fan there are some bargains to be had here as well. Hulks' #1-5 were grossly undervalued, but that gap is rapidly closing. Avengers #4 is also headed in the same direction. For books having the greatest potential for growth look to titles like Tales To Astonish, Tales Of Suspense, and Strange Tales. Some good examples here are TOS #59 with the first Cap/Iron Man double feature, TOS #63 with the first Silver Age origin of Cap, TOS #65 with the first Silver Age Red Skull, and TOS #66 with the origin of the Red Skull. Also look for high grade copies of the Submariner #8 sporting the glossy black cover with Subby and The Thing squared off in classic battle posture, a very cheap book at this time.

Recent Golden Age Sales: Action #65 NM $325; Adventure #113 VG $65; Batman #14 VF $1400; Detective #67 VG/FN $250; Detective #99 FN/VF $350; Daring #9 FN $110; Exciting #59 VF/NM $230; Rocket Kelly #1-3 FN $235, Piracy #3 VG $13, Piracy #5 FN $30, Wonder Comics #9, 10, 16, 18 VG to FN $135, and Wonder #1 (1939) GD $450.

Recent Silver Age Sales: Action #325 VF $8; #333 FN $3, Adventure #266 GD $8, #333 VF $10, #338 VG $5, #341 VF/NM $10; ASM #30 VG/FN $25; Batman #234 VF $30; Brave & Bold #34 FN $350; Challengers Of The Unknown #33 VF $12; Hawkman #1 VF $250, #4 FN/VF $55, #12 VF/NM $32, #21 FN/VF $12, Justice League #54 VF/NM $12; Mystery In Space #101 VF $10; Showcase #34 GD $120, #55 VF/NM $100; Silver Surfer #1 FN $150; Strange Tales #110 VG/FN $200; Wonder Woman #91 FN $10, Batman Prell premium NM $50; and a coverless Green Lantern #1 for $20.

Auction Sales: We also participated in the recent Christie's Auction and sold a Brave & Bold set #34-36 and #42-44 for $1000, average condition was VF. A set of Showcase issues #34-36 with an average condition of VG/FN was also sold for $380.

We recently acquired an interesting premium from the Kellogg's cereal company featuring "Funny Jungleland Moving Pictures", copyright of 1909. It features a tri-fold cover with strips cut such that you can change the legs, heads, and bodies of the creatures creating different animals. Is this truly the first gimmick cover? Other acquisitions in the works are runs of uncirculated Silver Age Marvels. It seems the owners of these books had an uncle that worked at Marvel Comics in the 60s' where he assembled runs of certain titles and sent them to his nephews. We are also pursuing a collection of "original owner" Golden Age Wonder Woman and Romance comics. Rumor has it that the owner also has a set of Wonder Woman glasses and a Wonder Woman doll. Speaking of dolls, if any of you have G.I. Joes from the 60s and 70s let us know.

The Hardest Books To Find: Occasionally someone will ask (out of curiosity) what are the hardest books to find. I think there are several levels of difficulty and it depends on what books you are looking for. DC Silver Age in high grade (VF/NM or better) is tough to find but with diligence (and $) it is obtainable.

EC horror/science fiction is extremely tough to find in high grade. This is probably because when a youngster was caught with one of these "offensive" comics the owner would suffer the wrath of the parent. So at all cost these treasures must be well hidden. These issues therefore suffered terrible indignities such as being rolled up and shoved into back pockets, stored in tree houses or under a rock in the back yard, and late night retrieval from the garbage after the parents had finally gone to bed. These books suffered the general wear and tear of something that parents had forbidden children to have, which of course made them all that much more desirable. If you can find copies of these titles in NM/MT condition at 3 times guide, count yourself lucky to even have had the opportunity to purchase the book. They seldom appear for sale in this grade.

The scarcer Golden Age books in VG or better are also very tough to find. Higher grade issues in this category very seldom become available for sale. If you have the chance to purchase one of these books at (or slightly over) guide, do not hesitate because the book will probably be gone if you do. Surprisingly, these are still very affordable books in many cases.

The toughest categories to fill are the rare and extremely rare Golden Age books. Estimates of the total copies in existence often are less than 20 for books in this group. These books can be extremely expensive because the seller can literally "name their price" and will usually get it. If you get a chance to purchase a book in this group and you can afford it, just do it! Sometimes these books survive in high grade as well, which is just an added bonus to its rarity.

In closing, if anyone knows anything about the premium offered in Wonder #1 (1939 Fox) please contact us. We would also like to compare an anomaly in a copy of Terrific #1 so if another collector out there has a copy we would appreciate it if you could help us answer a few questions. Thanks again for the opportunity to express our views, and thanks to all of you collectors for reading the new Overstreet Comic Book Marketplace. Good hunting to all of you. ■

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Introduction

Congratulations! You have just purchased the most reliable and accurate price guide in the field. In fact, the Overstreet was recently voted "Best Price Guide" by Diamond Comic Distributor retailers! This year Overstreet Publications entered its 23rd year of price reporting. That means that the #1 edition of **The Comic Book Price Guide** is older than many of the comic fans that presently use the **Overstreet Comic Book Price Guide**. We would like to take this opportunity to thank the many fans that have helped make us the number one standard in comic book price reporting. We hope you'll join the thousands who say "make mine Overstreet!"

The first **Overstreet Comic Book Price Guide** was published in 1970 and through the years has been the accepted price guide in the field. The first issue of **Overstreet's Comic Book Price Update** (supplement to the annual Overstreet Price Guide #12) was published in the Fall of 1982. After a few years of publishing a mid-year Update, the comic market finally demanded a more frequent price report. The Update eventually became a bi-monthly. **Overstreet's Comic Book Marketplace** is now the official monthly price guide magazine for Overstreet Publications.

GENERAL INFORMATION

About Pricing: The prices shown in the price guide section represent an honest and responsible evaluation of current market values. The prices represent an average of dealer retail prices compiled from data supplied by our Board Of Special Advisors. Prices often vary widely from region to region because supply and demand varies. Therefore, each seller should determine prices based on both prices supplied here and regionally specific supply and demand factors.

The Listed Prices in this Guide, particularly on more expensive books, are a "moving average" of the market prices realized over the past month or two. Thus prices are constantly being recorded and averaged prior to the release of each issue. It is important for collectors to understand that since the Overstreet price is an average, it will never be the same as the highest or lowest most recent sale price.

Collectors will, at some point, attempt to sell some or all of their acquisitions at a wholesale price to dealers. It is important to remember that dealers buy comics in order to resell them to other collectors Therefore, dealers will always pay a higher percentage for issues that they think can be sold quickly and a much lower percentage for items that have a low demand. Dealers must always buy at a percentage that allows for their overhead plus a fair margin of profit. Most dealers will pay anywhere from 25-75% of the prices listed in this guide depending on inventory needs and local market conditions However, material from the past 10 to 15 years is readily available and dealers may only offer a very small amount (20% or less) or may not be interested at all.

PRICING NEW COMICS

This guide lists retail prices of current comic books. Titles that are listed with an asterisk have a value that may range up to cover price of current comics.

PRICING LOWER GRADES

Prices listed in this Guide are for comic books in NEAR MINT condition. The value of a comic in a lower grade will be a percentage (listed below) of the near mint value. To find the correct price spread for a specific book, consult the annual Overstreet *Comic Book Price Guide* compute the price spread between the listed Good, Fine and Near Mint prices.

NEAR MINT	100%
VERY FINE	69-75% of Near Mint price
FINE	38-50% of Near Mint price
VERY GOOD	20-34% of Near Mint price
GOOD	10-17% of Near Mint price
FAIR	5-12% of Near Mint price

PRICING INDICATORS

+	A price that has increased since last issue
-	A price that has decreased since last issue
H	A high demand issue that is currently in vogue

GRADING COMICS

The grading of a comic book is done by simply looking at the book and describing its condition, which may range from absolutely perfect newsstand condition *Mint* to extremely worn, dirty, and torn *Poor*.

RESTORED COMICS

Since this hobby began it has always been tempting for the dealer or collector to perform repairs on comic books. In the past, Tape was used to seal tears, rips, loose covers and centerfolds and spine reinforcement. It is now known that many tapes are very damaging to paper Today, most repairs are done with neutral pH glues, special invisible papers and webbing reinforcement.

For years now, comic books have had minor to major restoration work performed. It is very important for the novice collector to understand that repaired/restored books are not worth the same as books in the same grade in their original virgin condition. The more expensive the book, the more likelihood of the presence of restoration. After restoration, these books are not actually higher grades, but are altered lower grade books.

Obviously some books need to be repaired and/or restored to improve their visual appeal and value.

Note: The lower the grade, the less objection repairs/restoration become. In fact the low grades sell better when they have been cleaned up to have better visual appeal. Whenever possible, books should be examined very closely for repair/restoration before purchase Major things to look for are: bleaching, whitening, trimming, interior spine and tear reinforcement, gluing, restapling, missing pieces replaced, wrinkles pressed out of covers, recoloring and reglossing covers Dealers should state that a book has been restored. Any kind of restoration is considered a defect from the original condition of the book.

GRADING DEFINITIONS

The hardest part of evaluating a comic is being honest and objective with yourself, and knowing what characteristics to look for in making your assessment. Very Important: A book must be graded in its entirety, considering all defects, fairly and honestly. Do not grade just the cover alone. A book in any of the grades listed must be in Original Unrestored condition. Restored books must be described as such. After examining these characteristics a comic may be assigned one of the following grades:

THE EIGHT NOMANCLATURE GRADES AND THEIR NUMERIC RANGE

MINT (MT) (One 100-98)

Near perfect in every way. Only the most subtle bindery or printing defects are allowed. Cover is flat with no surface wear. Cover inks are bright with high reflectivity and minimal fading. Corners are cut square and sharp. Staples are generally centered and clean with no rust. Cover is generally centered and firmly secured to interior pages. Paper is supple and fresh Spine is tight and flat.

NEAR MINT (NM) (One 97-90)

Nearly perfect. Cover is flat with no surface wear Cover inks are bright with high reflectivity and minimum of fading. Corners are cut square and sharp with ever so slight blunting permitted. Staples are generally centered, clean with no rust. Cover is well centered and firmly secured to interior pages. Paper is supple and like new Spine is tight and flat.

VERY FINE (VF) (One 89-75)

An excellent copy with outstanding eye appeal. Sharp, bright and clean with supple pages Pages and covers can be yellowish/tannish (at the least) but not brown and will usually be off-white to white.

FINE (FN) (One 74-55)

An exceptional, above average copy that shows minor wear but still relatively flat, clean and glossy with no subscription crease or brown margins. Typical defects include: light spine wear, minor surface wear, a light crease, minor yellowing/tanning to interior pages. Compared to a VF, cover inks are beginning to show a significant reduction in reflectivity but is still highly collectible and desirable.

VERY GOOD (VG) (One 54-35)

The average used comic book most commonly found. This comic shows moderate wear but eye appeal has not been reduced to the point that it is not desirable. One or two minor markings on cover or minor spine roll are allowed. Lightly creased along spine or extremities, subscription crease, loose centerfold, or minor chip or piece missing allowed.

GOOD (GD) (One 34-15)

This comic has all pages and covers, although there may be small pieces missing. Commonly creased, scuffed, abraded and soiled, but books in this grade are completely readable. Paper quality is low but not brittle.

FAIR (FR) (ONE 14-5)

Very heavily read and soiled, but still complete. Damaged beyond collectibility for most collectors, bring 30-50 per cent of the Good price

POOR (PR) (One 1-4)

Sufficiently degraded so as to have little or no collector value. Often severely stained, abraded, defaced, or damaged beyond readability

Overstreet's COMIC BOOK PRICE GUIDE

ACTION COMICS (Weekly #601-642)
Dec. 1954-Present
Historical Periodical Pubi./DC Comics
1 Reprint: 1988, 50¢-c

1-Last pre-code issue	58.00	131.00	175.00
220	50.00	113.00	150.00
240	40.00	90.00	120.00
243-251	30.00	68.00	90.00
252- Origin & 1st app. Brainiac	217.00	488.00	650.00 H
253- Origin & 1st app. Supergirl; re-intro of Metallo, his 2nd appearance since Superboy #9	214.00	536.00	750.00 H
253-2nd app Supergirl	43.00	107.00	150.00 H
254- 1st meeting Of Bizarro & Superman	39.00	96.00	135.00 H
255- 1st Bizarro Lois Lane	26.00	64.00	90.00
261	17.00	43.00	60.00
262- 264-266, 268-270	13.00	32.00	45.00
263- Origin Bizarro World	19.00	46.00	65.00 H
267- 3rd Legion app.	79.00	196.00	275.00 H
271-275, 277-282: 282-Last 10¢ issue	11.00	29.00	40.00
276- 6th Legion app.	34.00	86.00	120.00
283- Legion Of Super-Villains app.	14.00	36.00	50.00
284- Mon-El app.	14.00	36.00	50.00
285- 12th Legion app.	14.00	36.00	50.00
286-289	7.00	19.00	26.00
290(7/62)-17th Legion app; Phantom Girl app.	7.00	19.00	26.00
291, 292, 294-299	5.00	13.00	18.00
293- Origin Comet	11.00	27.00	38.00
300- (5/63)	6.00	14.00	20.00
301-303, 305-308, 310-320	3.00	9.00	12.00
304- Origin & first app. of Black Flame	4.00	11.00	15.00
309- Legion app.	4.00	10.00	14.00
321-333, 335-340	2.00	5.00	7.50
334- Giant (6-/20)	5.00	11.00	16.00
341-346, 348-359	1.90	4.60	6.50
347, 360. (Giants G-33 & G-45)	2.90	7.10	10.00
361-372, 374-380	1.40	3.60	5.00
373- Giant (6-57)	2.30	5.70	8.00
381-424, 411-Eclipso origin-r	1.10	2.90	4.00
425- Adams art	1.70	4.30	6.00
426-436, 438, 439	0.90	2.10	3.00
437, 443- 100 page giants	1.40	3.60	5.00
440- 1st Grell-a on Green Arrow	1.70	4.30	6.00
441- Grell-a on Green Arrow	1.40	3.60	5.00
442, 444-499: 484-Earth II Superman & Lois Lane wed	0.70	1.80	2.50
500- Superman life story(1.00-c, 68pgs)	0.60	1.40	2.00
501-551, 554-582	0.40	1.10	1.50
552, 553- Animal Man C&S	1.70	4.30	6.00
583- Alan Moore	2.00	5.00	7.00
584-Byrne begins	0.40	1.10	1.50
585-599, 598- 1st app. Checkmate	0.30	0.70	1.00
600- (2.50-c)	1.10	2.90	4.00
601-642: Weekly issues (1.50, 48 pgs.); 611-614: Catwoman stories; 613-618: Nightwing stories	0.50	1.00	1.50
643- Monthly begins, Perez c/a, scripts	0.50	1.00	1.50
644-649, 651-661, 663-666, 668-679: 644- Perez-a begins. 679-Last 1.00-c	0.40	0.70	1.00
650- Double size, 1.50-c	0.60	1.00	1.50
662- Superman reveals id to Lois Lane, story cont. in Superman #53	1.20	2.30	3.50 +
667- (1.75-c, 52 pgs.)	0.60	1.10	1.75
680-682	0.40	0.80	1.25
683-Doomsday cameo	2.60	4.90	7.50 + H
683- 2nd print,3rd print	0.40	0.80	1.25
684-Doomsday battle iss.	0.80	5.20	8.00 + H
685, 686- Funeral For A Friend iss.; Supergirl app.	0.70	1.30	2.00 H
687-(1.95)-Collector's Ed. w/die-cut outer-c & mini-poster; cont'd from Advs. of Superman #500	0.70	1.30	2.00 H
687-(1.50)-Newsstand Ed. w/mini-poster	0.50	1.00	1.50 H
Annual 1 ('87)-Arthur Adams-a; Batman app.	2.10	3.90	6.00
Annual 2 ('89, 1.75-c)-Perez-c/a	0.70	1.30	2.00
Annual 3 ('91, 68 pgs., 2.00-c)	0.70	1.30	2.00
Annual 4 ('92, 2.50-c)	0.90	1.60	2.50

ADAM-12 (TV)
Dec. 1973-No. 10, Feb, 1976 (photo covers)

Gold Key			
1	6.30	11.70	18.00
2-10	2.80	5.20	8.00

ADDAMS FAMILY (TV cartoon)
Oct, 1974-No. 3, Apr. 1975 (Hanna Barbera)

Gold Key			
1	8.60	21.40	30.00 H
2, 3	6.30	11.70	18.00 H

ADVENTURE COMICS
No. 200, MAY,1954 - No. 503, Sept, 1983
National Periodical Publications/DC Comics

200	79.00	196.00	275.00
201-209	54.00	136.00	190.00
210- 1st app. Krypto	471.00	1179.00	1650.00 H
211-213, 215-220	43.00	107.00	150.00
214- 2nd app. Krypto	46.00	114.00	160.00 H
221-246: 241-Batman x-over (6/58)	37.00	93.00	130.00
247- 1st app. Legion Of Super Heroes	743.00	1857.00	2600.00 H
248-252, 254, 255	27.00	68.00	95.00
253- Superboy/Roblin first meet	37.00	93.00	130.00 H
256- Origin Green Arrow	107.00	268.00	375.00 H
257-259	24.00	61.00	85.00
260- 1st Silver Age origin of Aquaman (5/59)	107.00	268.00	375.00 H
261-266, 268, 270	17.00	43.00	60.00
267-2nd Legion Of SuperHeroes	164.00	411.00	575.00 H
269- Intro Aqualad	36.00	89.00	125.00 H
271- Origin Luthor retold	77.00	105.00	140.00 H
272-274, 276-280: 276- 3rd Metallo	15.00	34.00	45.00
275- Origin Superman/Batman team retold	33.00	75.00	100.00 H
281, 284, 287-289: 288-Bizarro cover	15.00	34.00	45.00
282- 5th Legion app.	33.00	75.00	100.00
283- Intro Phantom Zone	22.00	49.00	65.00
285- 1st Bizarro World story in Adv	23.00	53.00	70.00
286- 1st Bizarro Mxyzptlk	20.00	45.00	60.00
290- 8th Legion app., last 10¢ issue	30.00	68.00	90.00
291, 292, 295-298: 295- Bizarro-c	10.00	23.00	30.00
293- 13th Legion app.	20.00	45.00	60.00
294-1st Bizarro M. Monroe, Pres. Kennedy; Bizarro cover	20.00	45.00	60.00 H
299-1st Gold Kryptonite (8/62)	12.00	26.00	35.00
300- Legion series begins (9/62)	76.00	189.00	265.00
301- Origin Bouncing Boy	23.00	57.00	80.00
302-305	17.00	38.00	50.00
306-310	13.00	29.00	38.00
311-320	9.00	21.00	28.00
321- Intro Time Trapper	7.00	17.00	22.00
322-330: 327- Intro Lone Wolf in Legion	7.00	13.00	20.00
331-340	5.60	10.40	16.00
341- Triplicate Girl becomes Duo Damsel	4.20	7.80	12.00
342-345, 347, 350, 351	3.20	5.90	9.00
346, 348, 349	3.50	6.50	10.00
352, 354-360	2.80	5.20	8.00
353- Death of Ferro Lad in Legion	4.60	8.50	13.00
361-364, 366, 368-370	2.10	3.90	6.00
365, 367, 371, 372	2.50	4.60	7.00
373, 374, 376-380: 380- Last Legion in Adventure Comics	2.10	3.90	6.00
375- Intro Quantum Queen	2.50	4.60	7.00
381-389, 391-400	0.70	1.30	2.00
390- (80 pg. giant G-81), 403- (68 pg. Giant G-81)	2.10	3.90	6.00
401, 402, 404-410: 52 pg. issues	0.70	1.30	2.00
403- Giant G-81, Legion-r	1.80	3.30	5.00
411, 413, 418, 419: 32 pg. issues	0.40	0.70	1.00
412- Reprint origin & 1st app. Animal Man from Strange Adv. #180	1.40	2.60	4.00
414- R- 2nd Animal Man from Str. Adv. #184	1.10	2.00	3.00
415, 420 - Animal Man reprints	0.50	1.00	1.50
416- Giant DC-10: G.A.-r	0.40	0.80	1.20
417- Morrow Vigilante, Frazetta Shuning Knight reprints Adv. 161	0.40	0.80	1.20
421-424	0.40	0.70	1.00
425- New look begins	0.50	1.00	1.50
426-458: 435- Mike Grell's 1st comics work	0.40	0.70	1.00
459-460, 463-466	0.40	0.70	1.00
461, 462- Death of Earth II Batman	1.40	2.60	4.00
467-490: Last comic-size iss.	0.40	0.70	1.00
491-499: 491-100 pg. digests begin	0.40	0.80	1.20
500- All Legion reprints	0.60	1.00	1.60
501-503: Golden Age reprints	0.40	0.80	1.20

ADVENTURES INTO THE UNKNOWN
No. 51, Jan.,1954-No. 174, Aug, 1967
American Comics Group

51(1/54)	36.00	88.00	125.00 + H
52-58 (3-D effect-c/stories). 52-E.C. swipe/Haunt Of Fear	20.00	50.00	70.00 H
14	31.00	79.00	110.00 H
59- Last 3-D- story (no 3-D-c)	20.00	50.00	70.00 H
60- Woodesque-a by Landau	13.00	30.00	40.00 H
61- Last pre- code issue (1-2/55)	12.00	26.00	35.00 H
62-70	8.00	19.00	25.00
71-90	6.00	12.00	16.00
91,96(#95 on inside),107,116- All contain Williamson-a	8.00	19.00	25.00
92-95,97-99,101-106.108-115,117-127: 109-113, 118-Whitney painted -c	6.00	10.00	16.00
100	7.00	13.00	20.00
128-Williamson/Krenkel/Torres-a(r) Forbidden Worlds #63, last 10 cent issue	6.00	10.00	16.00
129-150	5.00	9.00	14.00
151-153 :153-Magic Agent app.	4.00	8.00	12.00
154- Nemesis series begins (origin), ends #170	6.00	10.00	16.00
155-167, 169-174, 157- Magic Agent app	4.00	8.00	12.00
168- Dtkto-a(p)	5.00	9.00	14.00

ADVENTURES OF BOB HOPE, THE
No. 32, 1955- No. 109, Feb-Mar, 1968
National Periodical Publications

32-40	17.00	38.00	50.00
41-50	13.00	30.00	40.00
51-70	9.00	20.00	26.00
71-93, 95-105	5.00	9.00	14.00
94- Aquaman cameo	6.00	10.00	16.00
106-109- All monster c/stories by N. Adams- c/a	9.00	20.00	26.00

ADVENTURES OF CAPTAIN AMERICA
Sept., 1991-No. 4, Jan., 1992 (4 95-c, color, squarebound)
Marvel Comics

1-Embossed-c	2.00	3.00	5.00
2-4: Austin c/a(i)	2.00	3.00	5.00

Adventure Comics #247, © DC

Are They A Good Investment?

CBM's Bicel 40 Survey

CBM surveys its advisors to determine the average buying and selling (wholesale and retail) prices of 40 miscellaneous comic books (in specific grades) from a range of different publishing eras. The relationship (ratio) between the buy and sell price is the "Buy-Back" percentage, and is considered by experienced collectors to be one of the best investment indicators. Although there are certainly exceptions, generally speaking, the higher the Buy - Back percentage the better the investment.

Less than 33% = low yield investment.

33-66% = medium.

Above 66 %= high.

Also highlighted is the comic with the highest Buy-Back percentage of this group. ■

	TITLE & ISSUE NUMBER	Highest Buy Price	Retail Price	Avg Buy Back %
1	All-Star #8 FN	$1,378.00	$2,748.00	50.15%
2	Captain America #74 FN	$165.00	$265.00	62.15%
3	Captain Marvel Adventures #100 FN	$42.00	$80.00	52.50%
4	Detective #38 FN	$3,114.00	$78.00	53.85%
5	Marvel Mystery #8 FN	$587.00	$5,300.00	58.75%
6	New York World's Fair 1940 FN	$994.00	$1,043.00	56.28%
7	Showcase #6 FN	$373.00	$1,982.00	50.15%
8	Showcase #15 FN	$159.00	$669.00	55.75%
9	Star Spangled #7 FN	$513.00	$301.00	52.82%
10	Superman #2 FN	$1,240.00	$1,036.00	49.52%
11	Whiz #2 (#1) FN	$6,395.00	$2,266.00	54.72%
12	Amazing Adult Fantasy #7 VFN	$97.00	$12,421.00	51.49%
13	Brave & Bold #24 VFN	$64.00	$184.00	52.72%
14	Fantastic Four #2 VFN	$679.00	$120.00	53.33%
15	Hulk #2 VFN	$509.00	$1,256.00	54.06%
16	Hulk #6 VFN	$405.00	$930.00	54.73%
17	Little Dot #1 VFN (1960)	$109.00	$732.00	55.33%
18	MAD #1 VFN	$706.00	$247.00	44.13%
19	Magnus, Robot Fighter #2 VFN (Gold Key)	$40.00	$1,358.00	51.99%
20	My Greatest Adventure #6 VFN	$50.00	$76.00	52.63%
21	Mystery In Space #75 VFN	$58.00	$99.00	50.51%
22	Our Army At War #83 VFN	$122.00	$112.00	51.79%
23	Showcase #20 VFN	$194.00	$236.00	51.69%
24	Showcase #23 VFN	$328.00	$362.00	53.59%
25	Showcase #37 VFN	$155.00	$626.00	52.40%
26	Space Adventures #34 VFN	$25.00	$294.00	52.72%
27	Star Trek #3 VFN (Gold Key)	$48.00	$55.00	45.45%
28	Strange Tales #89 VFN	$40.00	$105.00	45.71%
29	Turok #30 VFN	$14.00	$78.00	51.28%
30	X-Men #2 VFN	$289.00	$29.00	48.28%
31	Batman: Sword Of Azrael NM	$3.50	$564.00	51.24%
32	Cerebus #21 NM	$11.50	$8.00	43.75%
33	Daredevil #181 NM	$2.00	$30.00	38.33%
34	Dark Knight #1 NM	$6.50	$6.50	30.77%
35	Harbinger #4 (Valiant) NM	$21.00	$19.00	34.21%
36	Magnus #12 (Valiant) NM	$37.00	$43.00	48.84%
37	New Mutants #87 NM	$17.00	$75.00	49.33%
38	Solar #14 (Valiant) NM	$5.50	$45.00	37.78%
39	Spawn #5 NM	$2.00	$11.75	46.81%
40	Superman #75 NM (comic only, no polybag or extras)	$3.00	$4.50	44.44%
			$7.00	42.86%

CBM Advisors Suggest Comic Picks

PRE - 1950

1. Captain America #1-#5
Big (Marvel) anniversary next year = increased interest.

2. All-Star #8
Wonder Woman still a "Sensation"!

3. N.Y. Worlds Fair 1939
Rare Sandman 1st app.

4. Captain Marvel Jr. #1
Fawcett Golden Age keys are still undervalued bargains.

5. Detective #27
Batman's 1st returns again!

6. Red Raven #1
Rare Timely w/ early Kirby.

7. All American #16
The *rarest* DC Golden key!

8. Young Allies #1
Captain America, Human Torch, & the Red Skull

9. Action #7 & #10
Superman's scarce 2nd & 3rd cover appearance.

10. More Fun #52
New Spectre fans looking for his 1st appearance

1950-1969

1. Strange Tales #89
Fin Fang Foom is gonna zoom…into the ozone!

2. Amazing Spider-Man #1
After AF #15, highest demand Silver Marvel key

3. Brave and Bold #28
JLA's 1st in demand!

4. Fantastic Four #5
Join the Doom boom!

5. Showcase #9
The rarest Showcase…Still scarce in all grades!

6. Our Army at War #81 & #83
Veteran collectors and new recruits are looking for these!

7. Charlton Captain Atom
Thermonuclear Ditko-mania.

8. MAD Magazines
What…me worry? Yes, if you don't have these

9. Turok #1 (4 color #596)
Don't get "saur" if you can't find them! (groan …)

10. Amazing Fantasy #15
Destined to be a record breaker in the coming years.

1970-1985

1. All-Star Western #10
Jonah Hex in demand.

2. House of Secrets #92
He's big, he's ugly, he lives in a swamp…and you can't find him in high grade

3. Marvel Spotlight #12
"Devilishly" hot issue.

4. Jimmy Olsen #133
Scarcest Kirby 4th world keeps coming back.

5. Amaz. Spider-Man #100
Milestone key w/ unlimited potential

6. Star Wars #1
An American mythology reborn

7. Conan #1
Name another 1970's survivor, by Cromm!

8. Ironfist #14
Sabretooth and his new mag will once again pump interest into this issue

9. Marvel Feature, 2-in-1, Premiere, & Spotlight
Still affordable back issues.

10. Defenders #1
Subby #34 & #35 tells all!

1986 - PRESENT

1. Ren & Stimpy #1
Sales are not skimpy!

2. Amaz. Spider-Man #300
Venom driven—copies readily available

3. Magnus #12
It's a Dinosaur and Turok stampede get it or get out of the way!

4. Spawn
Regularity equals popularity.

5. Eternal Warrior #4 & #5
Bloodshot gives this a transfusion

6. X-O Manowar
Pre-Unity, with room for huge growth.

7. Azrael 1-4
The new Batman?

8. Adv. Of Superman #500
New beginnings and big expectations.

9. Amaz. Spider-Man
#361 & 362 - continuous clamoring for copies!!

10. Turok
The Valiant mega hit!

Keep Your Eye On...

CBM Market Watch

Welcome to the second installment of the Overstreet Non-Sports Card Price Guide, a regular feature of Overstreet's Comic Book Marketplace. CBM will keep you current on all of the hottest comic-related cards in the "Marketplace"... as well as those newly introduced!

You can depend on the Overstreet Card Guide to provide accurate values for current non-sports cards. That's because the prices shown here are averages of genuine dealer retail prices, not estimates! The pricing information is compiled from data supplied by our board of advisors (listed at the beginning of the non-sports card section). You will note that this compilation lists prices for card sets, singles, specialty cards, and even unopened boxes when warranted. We have not itemized every card single, per the opinions of the majority of our advisors. We concur with their view... namely that most cards are assigned an average price for all cards in that set. Where single card prices do differ (e.g. specialty cards), card prices are listed separately. Prices often vary on certain individual cards within a set. As most collectors know, this is due to the popularity of a specific character, regionally specific market pressures, and/or the pressures of simple supply and demand. Collectors should take this into consideration when pricing cards.

All suggestions and criticism are welcome and your input is important to us! If you'd like to lend a hand in making this the Overstreet Card Price Guide the most reliable card price guide ever published, send your comments to: Marketplace Mail, P.O. Box 2610, Cleveland, TN 37320 or FAX us at (615) 479-8156. Until next time...Happy Collecting!

NON-SPORTS CARD BOARD OF SPECIAL ADVISORS

MICHAEL BOLIN
Rookies Sports Cards and Comics
3120 Taylor Boulevard
Louisville, KY 40215
(502) 363-2227

ALLAN JONES
Big Al's Hobby Shop
319 West Drive
White House, TN 37188
(615) 672-2209

DANNY JONES
The Hobby Shop
5514 New Cut Road
Louisville, KY 40214
(502) 368-7232

KEN STOUT/ CHRIS FOXX
The Sports Page
437 Spring Street
Jeffersonville, IN 47130
(812) 288-6160

DR. JOE DUNGAN
Now and Then Collectibles
1633 Babcock, Suite 212
San Antonio, TX 78229
(210) 490-3776

HOWARD ISAACS
Tropic Comics
313 S. State Road 7
Plantation, FL 33317
(305) 587-8878

CHARLES ABAR
Charles Abar Warehouse
1100 Industrial Drive #17
San Carlos, CA 94070
(415) 592-0875

JERRY BELCHER
Bases Loaded
6801 Dixie Highway
Louisville, KY 40258
(502) 933-7135

LINDA KANAI
Triple Play
3145 Preston Highway
Louisville, KY 40213
(502) 637-5303

NON-SPORTS CARD PRICE GUIDE

A-Team
Topps 1983
66 Card Set/12 stickers 7.50
Singles .10 ea.

Advance Dungeons & Dragons 1991
1 SR 1991
Gold Border: 746 cards 600.00
Series I, singles 1.00 ea.
(1-373??) rare
Series II, singles .50 ea.
(374??-746)
Factory Set - Silver Border, 750 cards 25.00

Advanced Dungeons & Dragons 1992
TSR 1992
Gold Border: 750 cards 65.00
Singles .08 ea.
Factory Set - Silver Logo, 750 cards 25.00

Archie Comic Cards
Skybox 1992
Box 22.00
120 Card Set 8.95
5 Holograms 5.00 ea.

Arthur Adams
Comic Images 1989
45 Card Set 10.00
Singles .20 ea.

Back to the Future II
Topps 1989
88 Card Set/11 stickers 10.00
Singles .10 ea.
Stickers .35 ea.

Barbie
Panini/Action 1992
196 Card Set 20.00
Singles .10 ea.

Barbie and Friends Series II
Panini/Action 1992
198 Card Set/15 stickers 20.00
Singles .10 ea.

Barbie Trading Cards Series I
Mattel 1990
300 Card Set 30.00
Singles .10 ea.

Barbie Trading Cards Series II
Mattel 1991
300 Card Set 30.00
Singles .10 ea.

Batman Series I
Topps 1966
55 Card Set (Black Bat) 130.00
Singles 2.25 ea.

Batman - A Series
Topps 1966
44 Card Set (Red Bat) 110.00
Singles 2.25 ea.

Batman - B Series
Topp 1966
44 Card Set (Blue Bat) 120.00
Singles 2.50 ea.

Batman Deluxe Trading Card Set
Topps 1989 (reissue of 1966 cards)
143 Card Set 18.00

Batman Movie Series I
Topps 1989
132 Card Set/22 stickers 14.00
Singles .08 ea.
Stickers .10 ea.
Factory Set w/11 bonus cards 25.00

Batman Movie Series II
Topps 1989
132 Card Set/22 stickers 14.00
Singles .08 ea.
Stickers 10 ea.
Factory Set w/11 bonus cards 25.00

Batman - Real Photos
Topps 1966
55 Card Set 120.00
Singles 2.00 ea.

Batman Returns
Topps 1992
Box 18.00
88 Card Set 13.00
10 Stadium Club Card Set 4.00

Batman Returns Stadium
Topps 1992
Box 40.00
100 Card Set 25.00
Singles 30 ea.

Batman - Riddler Backs
Topps 1966
38 Card Set 115.00
Singles 2.75 ea.

Battlestar Galactica
Topps 1978
132 Card Set/22 stickers 35.00
Singles .20 ea.
Stickers .25 ea.

The Beatles - black and white
Topps 1964
Series I: 60 Card Set 130.00
Series II: 55 Card Set 115.00
Series III: 50 Card Set 110.00
Singles 2.00 ea.

The Beatles - color
Topps 1964
64 Card Set 140.00
Singles 2.00 ea.

The Beatles Diary
Topps 1964
60 Card Set 130.00
Singles 2.00 ea

The Beatles Movie
Topps 1964
55 Card Set 115.00
Singles 2.00 ea.

Beauty and the Beast
Pro Set 1992
90 Card Set 10.00
Singles .10 ea.

Beetlejuice
Dart 1990
100 Card Set/20 stickers 15.00
Singles .10 ea.
Stickers .20 ea.

Black Hole
Topps 1979
88 Card Set/22 Stickers 18.00
Singles .12 ea.
Stickers .20 ea

Boris Series I
Comic Images 1991
90 Card Set 15.00
Singles .15 ea.

Boris Series II
Comic Images 1992
90 Card Set 15.00
Singles .15 ea.
Prism (6) 8.50 ea.

Boris Series III
Comic Images 1993
72 Card Set - All Prism 25.00
Singles .30 ea.
Chromium (6) 12.50 ea.

Buck Rogers
Topps 1979
88 Card Set/22 stickers 17.50
Singles .12 ea.
Stickers .20 ea.

Captain America 50th Anniversary
Comic Images 1990
45 Card Set 10.00

Chris Achilleos
FPG 1992
90 Card Set 15.00
Singles .15 ea.
Silver Foil 2.25 ea.
Gold Foil 2.25 ea.

DC Cosmic Cards
Impel 1992
Box 18.00
180 Card Set 11.00
Singles .10 ea
Holograms 5.50 ea

Disney Collector Cards
Impel 1991 20.00
210 Card Set .08 ea.
Singles 20.00 ea.
Holograms: World Tour 30.00
Fantasia

Disney Collector Cards II
Skybox 1992
200 Card Set 20.00
Singles .08 ea.
Holograms (3) 11.00 ea.

Doomsday Death of Superman
Skybox 1992
(80,000 boxes produced: all have serial number)
Box 75.00
100 Card Set 36.00
Singles .45 ea.
4 Specialty Cards 25.00 ea.
2 Superman Symbol Cards 15.00 ea.

Dracula
Topps 1992
Box 35.00
100 Card Set 10.00
Singles .15 ea.
4 Card Set available thru comic only 1.00 ea.

Empire Strikes Back
Topps 1980
Series I: 132 cards/33 stickers 40.00
Series II: 132 cards/33 stickers 40.00
Series III: 88 cards/22 stickers 28.00
Singles .20 ea.
Stickers .20 ea.

Excalibur
Comic Images 1989
45 Card Set 10.00

Famous Comic Book Creators
Eclipse 1992
Box 16.00
110 Card Set 8.00

Frazetta
Comic Images 1992
90 Card Set 15.00
Singles .15 ea.

Garfield
Skybox 1992
100 Card Set/9 Tatoos 15.00
Singles .10 ea.
Tatoos .20 ea.
Holograms 4.00 ea.

Ghostrider
Comic Images 1990
45 Card Set 12.00

Ghostrider II
Comic Images 1992
Box 23.00
80 Card Set+10 Glow-In-Dark Cards 11.00
Singles .15 ea.
10 Glow-In-Dark Cards .15 ea.

G.I. Joe Trading Cards
Impel 1991
200 Card Set 22.00
Singles .10 ea.
Set and Footlocker Box 28.00

Heavy Metal
Comic Images 1991
90 Card Set 10.50
Singles .10 ea.

Hildebrandt
Comic Images 1992
90 Card Set 12.00
Singles .12 ea.
Prism (6) 8.50 ea.

Incredible Hulk
Topps 1979
88 Card Set/22 stickers 21.00
Singles .15 ea.
Stickers .25 ea.

Incredible Hulk
Comic Images 1992
Box 32.00
90 Card Set 12.00

Jim Lee
Comic Images 1990
45 Card Set 12.00

Jim Lee Series II
Comic Images 1991
45 Card Set 12.00

KISS Trading Cards
Donruss 1978
Series I: 66 card set 40.00
Series II: 66 card set 40.00
Singles .50 ea.

Mad Magazine
Lime Rock 1992
Box 20.00
55 Card Set 10.00
1 Hologram 10.00

Marvel First Cover II
Comic Images 1991
100 Card Set 10.00

Marvel Masterpieces
Skybox 1992
Box 60.00
100 Card Set 24.00
Singles .30 ea.
Specialty Cards 1-D, 2-D, 3-D, 5-D 12.00 ea.
Spiderman v. Venom 4-D 15.00 ea.

Marvel Universe I
Impel 1990
Box 100.00
162 Card Set 36.00
Singles .35 ea.
5 Holograms 11.00 ea.

Marvel Universe II
Impel 1992
Box 42.00
162 Card Set 20.00
Singles 20 ea.
5 Holograms 10.00 ea.

Marvel Universe III
Skybox (Impel) 1992
Box 21.00
200 Card Set 17.50
Singles .15 ea.
5 Holograms 7.50 ea.

McFarlane Series I
Comic Images 1989
45 Card Set 12.00

McFarlane Series II
Comic Images 1990
45 Card Set 10.00

Minnie 'n Me
Impel 1991
160 Card Set 10.00
Singles 05 ea

Olivia Series I
Comic Images 1992
90 Card Set 12.00
Singles .10 ea.
Prism (6) 9.00 ea.

Punisher
Comic Images 1988
50 Card Set 11.00

Punisher: Guts and Gunpowder
Comic Images 1992
Box 21.00
90 Card Set 12.00
3 Prism Cards 8.50 ea.
3 Scratch 'n Sniff Cards 7.00 ea.

Return of the Jedi
Topps 1983
Series I: 132 cards/33 stickers 20.00
Series II: 88 cards/22 stickers 15.00
Singles .10 ea.
Stickers .15 ea.

Rocketeer
Topps
Box 10.00
99 Card Set (plus 11 stickers) 8.00

Savage Dragon
Comic Images 1992
Box 27.00
90 Card Set 10.50
6 Prism Cards 8.00 ea.

Silver Surfer
Comic Images 1992
Box 52.00
72 All Prism Set 32.00
Singles .35 ea.

Spiderman: Todd McFarlane Era
Comic Images 1992
Box 65.00
90 Card Set 17.50
6 Prism Cards 21.50 ea.

Spiderman: 30th Anniversary
Comic Images 1992
Box 24.00
90 Card Set 10.00
6 Prism Cards 9.00 ea

Spiderman Team-Up
Comic Images 1990
45 Card Set 12.00

Star Trek
Leaf 1967
72 Card Set 1500.00
Singles 20.00 ea

Star Trek
Topps 1976
88 Card Set/22 stickers 200.00
Singles 1.75 ea.
Stickers 2.00 ea.

Star Trek: The Motion Picture
Topps 1979
88 Card Set/22 stickers 35.00
Singles .25 ea.
Stickers .45 ea.

Star Trek II: The Wrath of Kahn
FTCC 1983
30 Card Set 18.00
Singles .50 ea

Star Trek III: The Search for Spock
FTCC 1985
80 Card Set 18.00
Singles .18 ea.

Star Trek IV: The Voyage Home
FTCC 1987
60 Card Set 15.00
Singles .20 ea.

Star Trek Series I
Impel 1991
160 Card Set 17.50
Singles .10 ea.
Holograms (2) 30.00 ea.

Star Trek Series II
Impel 1991
150 Card Set 17.50
Singles .10 ea.
Holograms (2) 20.00 ea.
Set I and II in Collector's Tin 100.00

Star Trek: The Next Generation
Skybox 1992
120 Card Set 15.00
Singles .10 ea.
Bonus Cards (5) 2.50 ea.
Holograms (4) 15.00 ea.
Mail Offer Hologram 8.00 ea.

Star Wars
Topps 1977
Series I: Blue, 66cds/11 stkrs 32.00
Singles .30 ea.
Stickers .50 ea.
Series II: Red, 66cds/11 stkrs 28.00
Singles .25 ea.
Stickers .50 ea.
Series III: Yellow, 66cds/11 stkrs 25.00
Singles .20 ea.
Stickers .50 ea.
Series IV: Green, 66cds/11 stkrs 25.00
Singles .20 ea.
Stickers .50 ea.
Series V: Brown, 66cds/11 stkrs 25.00
Singles .20 ea.
Stickers .50 ea.

Superman
Topps 1966
66 Card Set 175.00
Singles 2.50 ea.

Superman: The Movie
Topps 1978
Series I: 77 cards/12 stickers 20.00
Singles .15 ea.
Stickers .25 ea.
Series II: 88 cards/14 stickers 22.00
Singles .15 ea.
Stickers .25 ea.

Superman II
Topps 1981
88 Card Set/22 Stickers 15.00
Singles .10 ea.
Stickers .25 ea.

Superman III
Topps 1983
99 Card Set/22 Stickers 16.50
Singles .10 ea.
Stickers .25 ea.

Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles: Movie
Topps 1990
Box 10.00
132 Card Set (plus 11 stickers) 8.00

Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles: Movie II
Topps 1991
Box 10.00
99 Card Set (plus 11 stickers) 5.00

Terminator II: Judgment Day
Impel 1991
140 Card Set 18.00
Singles .12 ea.
Collector's Box w/spec card & hlgrm. 50.00

Terminator II
Topps 1991
44 Sticker Set 7.00
Singles .15 ea.

Uncanny X-Men
Impel 1992
Box 26.50
100 Card Set 17.50
Singles .20 ea.
5 Holograms 5.75 ea.

Uncanny X-Men II
Impel 1993
Box 30.00
100 Card Set 12.50
Singles .20 ea
3 Holograms 8.75 ea.
9 Foil Stamp Cards 3.50 ea.
Wolverine Hologram 3-D 55.00

Uncanny X-Men Covers
Comic Images 1990
90 Card Set 14.00

Uncanny X-Men Covers II
Comic Images 1991
45 Card Set 10.00

Unity
Box 26.00
90 Card Set 13.50
Singles .20 ea
6 Chromium Cards 13.50 ea

Wolverine: From Then 'Till Now
Comic Images 1991
45 Card Set 15.00

Wolverine: From Then 'Till Now II
Comic Images 1992
Box 22.00
90 Card Set 10.00
Singles .10 ea.
6 Prism Cards 8.00 ea.

X-Force
Comic Images 1991
Box 21.00
90 Card Set 14.00

X-Men
Comic Images 1991
Box 21.00
90 Card Set 14.00

Youngblood
Comic Images 1992
Box 21.00
90 Card Set 10.00
6 Prism Cards 8.00

SkyBox
INTERNATIONAL
MEMO

To: Key Media Contacts
From: George White
Public Relations, SkyBox
Date: April 22, 1993
Re: DC Bloodlines Comic Cards from SkyBox

I have received a number of calls in the last few days from consumers and reporters inquiring about the DC Bloodlines trading card from SkyBox included in the polybagged collector's edition of *Adventures of Superman* #500 which hit the shelves (and didn't stay on them long!) last week.

The card, a sample of which is enclosed for your information, includes artwork and a brief description of each of the four new beings claiming to be Superman in the DC Universe. This card serves as a unique prototype card for the DC Bloodlines card series scheduled for release by SkyBox this June, as it utilizes that card series' innovative and colorful design concept.

These four Supermen represent the first four of more than 20 new characters who will be introduced to the DC Universe over the next few months and take part in the eagerly-anticipated Bloodlines story, which will run through 23 DC Annuals from May until October. These New Blood characters will then join the most powerful DC Super Heroes in an effort to defeat a group of extraterrestrial parasites which have invaded the earth in a two-issue limited series called *Bloodbath*.

The DC Bloodlines comic card line will provide an 81-card artistic and editorial summary of this incredible Bloodlines storyline, including 18 New Blood ("rookie") cards featuring new Super Heroes and Super Villains to be introduced in the annual series and seven Parasite cards. DC Bloodlines Trading Cards will feature all new, all original artwork created exclusively for this set by the top artists at DC Comics.

Finally, five bonus cards will be randomly inserted in the eight-card packs of DC Bloodlines Trading Cards, including four super-premium, foil-embossed cards of the "new" Supermen, and one very limited bonus Superman Exchange Card. Similar to the incredibly successful 1992 NBA Draft Lottery Pick Exchange Card randomly inserted in packs of 1992-93 NBA HOOPS Series I, the bonus Superman Exchange Card may be exchanged for the first card of the real Superman, when the mystery surrounding the demise of The Man of Steel in last year's Doomsday series is finally resolved.

The WEB LIVE

By Scott Davis & Neil Wetzler

The following is a list of alternative choices that CBM readers might otherwise overlook at the newsstand

Cain #I
Harris Comics
On the streets of New York, against the background of the crumbling Cold War, cybernetically enhanced Jude Cain is on the trail of a Senator s runaway daughter, who turns out to be more than just the daughter of a Senator. Will she be his ticket back to legitimacy and prestige or just a superpowered street urchin? Cain will need all of his street savvy as well as all of his armaments to get to the truth. This series is a superhero adventure mixed with a conspiracy theory that will keep you guessing while keeping the action going.

Tandra #12
Hanthercraft
This is the final adventure of David Galon, one of the main protagonists of Hanther s longrunning series Tandra. For twenty years, he has been sparring with Lord Kilthane, leader of the Wizard Ring. In an epic struggle, they threaten to bring down a world as well as each other. If you haven't seen Tandra before, you don't know what you're missing. Hanther s epic has been evolving over twenty year now, and all that work is bearing fruit. The interaction between word and pictures in his graphic albums works wonderfully. I strongly suggest you take a look at this issue, then try to get previous ones from your retailer!

Exit #5
Taxi Comics
Atmosphere, excellent, moody artwork, characterization, a story that doesn't feel the need to explain everything in a twentyfour page story, and no superheroes in sight. This is an outstanding comic by a very talented artist, Nabiel Kanan. If you can't find a copy of this series, bother your local retailer until they find a copy of it for you. You won't regret it. Oh, for a sample of the story, check out Cerebus v168, which has a Taxi backup feature.

King Vol. 1
Fantagraphics Books
Ho Che Anderson, a young Black creator, has rendered Kings life in a series of three graphic novels, the first of which is bring issued this month. Although exhaustively researched and historically accurate, King is Anderson's interpretation of Martin Luther King Jr.'s life, and doesn't gloss over the private and public difficulties that were part of King's fight to achieve equality and civil rights for all Americans. This is a book that could attract the kind of readers that all comic shops should at least be trying to attract, adult readers interested in finding valuable and entertaining graphic literature.

Bone #10
Cartoon Books
This is a reminder for folks out there that haven't tried this wonderful comic yet. Describing Bone is next to impossible. Just take my word for it, this is an excellent comic and worth your time and money.

Totem: The Steel Mosquito #1
Alpha Productions
The world of Totem returs in this new comic. The story is set in the future where an alien race has subjugated Earth, yet a band of freedom fighters continue to battle for the human race. This story tells the tale of Chris Leclerc, entrepreneur and playboy by day, totally beneath the notice of

alien subjugators. By night wever, he becomes the Steel squito, the scourge of the gumree government. This commendation is based on the past Totem series, hich I found to be entertain- g and welldone.

Deathwatch 2000
Continuity
The Continuity titles continue their revitalization with the second month of the megacrossover Deathwatch 2000. The Continuity characters all band together to face the greatest foe of their collective careers, the Deathwatch, a malevolent force which takes many forms, all of them out to destroy the world. This series would be a great place for new readers to start, providing they are willing to pick up each and every Continuity title issued during the Deathwatch crossover.

Elvira #1
Claypool Comics
The Mistress of the Dark returns to comics with her all new series. In this incarnation, Elvira is no longer just the host of a series of horror tales, she is the main character in the stories. Her trademark offbeat humor and adventuresome spirit are all here. In this first issue, Elvira clashes with her manipulative manager, who, because he can't fire Elvira, reassigns the Mistress of the Dark to a cooking show.

True Crime Comics Presents #1
Eclipse Comics
Eclipse takes the popularity of its historically accurate crime card sets as a sign that readers are intetested in this field, and translates that into a new comic series, focussing on true crime events. In this first issue, Valerie Jones and Jim Mooney tackle the question of who killed George Reeves, the star of TV's Superman show. The story follows Reeve's career up to his assumed suicide. Was his death by his own hand or was there something more sinister going on? You decide. This issue also sports a cover by Neil Adams!

Dangerous Times #6
Evolution Comics
Evolution Comics returns with a new issur of Dangerous Times, featuring Vidorix the Druid and Beleagean Days. Vidorix is the story of the last surviving dnuid who was magically sent to modern times. Beleagean Days is an interesting science fiction series. Two disparate genres, but the two of them make up an excellent, entertaining comic. Give the series a try. Continuing Evolution's trend of featuring name cover artists, Javier Saltares does the honors this issue.

The Bogie Man: Chinatoon #4
Atomeka
The adventures of the man who thinks he is Humphrey Bogart continue in this final issue of a four part series. In this issue, by John Wagner, Alan Grant, and Robin Smith, Frances F. Clunie, the Bogie Man, continues his perilous outing as the Humphrey Bogart character in the low-down sections of Glasgow's Chinatown.

Murcielaga SheBat #3
Heroic Publishing
This issue features the new creative team on the book, Martin Powell and Statema, as well as the origin of Murcielaga SheBat and the beginning of Daerick Gross's Reiki Warriors saga.

Shaman's Tears
Image Comics
Mike Grell joins the Image group with this new series which he writes, draws, and inks. It is a blend of metaphysics, science, and American Indian lore. Can this Sioux Indian superhero defeat the demihuman hordes of a superscientific paramilitary corporation? Pick up this and following issues for his battle against the forces of evil.

Understanding Comics
Tundra
Scott McCloud, creator of the delightful and thought provoking series, Zot!, returns to comics with this book about, you guessed it, comics. Multiaward winner McCloud takes us behind the scenes of producing comics, presented logically and clearly in comic format. Learn how time flows in comics, unlock the secrets of lines, witness the battle of words and pictures and take a trip through over three thousand years of the comic medium's history. Judging from the preview pages I've seen, this is a book not to be missed. ■

BATMAN PIN-UP

I was very surprised and flattered to see my name printed in the acknowledgments section of the 1993 23RD edition of the Overstreet Comic Book Price Guide! I'm glad to contribute any data I discover that I feel is relevant to the comic book hobby. I was pleased to see you include the 1st Batman/Robin pin-up under Batman #1. Sean Linkenback also seems to think that this is the very first Super-hero pin-up! Anyway, thank you very much for the acknowledgment...

I understand that recently a near mint copy of Motion Picture Funnies Weekly #1 was discovered! As this particular comic book is extremely rare I would think that this discovery is a major event for the hobby! Could we please get all the details on this find in a future issue of Comic Book Marketplace? Thanks again, make mine Overstreet!

John Mlachnik, Minnesota

We appreciate your contributions John! I personally can't come up with an earlier pin-up either. Maybe a CBM reader knows of one. As for the MPFW, is the newly discovered copy you mention by any chance the one mentioned in Roger Hills column in this issue? I found the article really fascinating. Good to hear from you again John.

MACQUESTION

Congratulations on your "new" format! I loved the "old" Overstreet Price Update, and the new one's even better!

I've got a question that I hope you can answer. I have been searching for comic inventory software for Macintosh computers and have not been able to locate one. I have inquired about it at several local shops as well as mail-order shops to no avail.

I know that there are several programs available for IBM and PC compatibles, but am unaware of any Mac-specific programs. I would appreciate any info you can give me.

Ron Hernandez, Pennsylvania

Can anyone help Ron with his question? Thanks for supporting the NEW CBM!

X-MEN AT THE STATE FAIR

The new Overstreet Comic Book Marketplace is a refreshing improvement over Overstreet's Update. I was disappointed that you didn't include some of the more popular Golden-Age comics. Maybe someday...

Would you please give us the low-down on the 1983 one-shot "X-Men At The State Fair In Texas"? What is an approximate print run? Because it was a giveaway in the Dallas Herald, is it a scarce book?

Let's see more articles on Golden-Age and Silver-Age comics and artists! I'd love to read an article on Steve Ditko; please show a photograph, I'm dying to know what he looks like!

In closing, I'd like to say that I agree with Steve Sibra's opinion on Valiant Comics. Every single copy circulating is mint, hence poor long term investment. Invest in Silver-Age and Golden-Age comics!

John Mlachnik, Minnesota

Long time no see, John. Here some data I dug up on "X-Men At The State Fair In Texas" for you. The Dallas Morning News ceased publication in December of 1991 (according to George Stone of The Dallas Times Herald). The Times archives indicates that the average daily circulation at the time the X-Men State Fair book was distributed was 263,065. I'm not sure that it came out in quantities equal to the circulation, but it is likely. If it was published with a Sunday edition of the same time period, the numbers would be significantly higher (354,075). Both numbers constitute a reasonable and intelligent guess. Hope that helps. If any CBM readers out there could help us shed more light on this, please contact me via Overstreet Publications. Thanks.

A BIT MORE DATA

I would like to personally thank you for providing this comic book collector with outstanding comic book price guides over the years. I feel that your price guides are the definitive source of information about comics. Of course, this information extends beyond prices. It encompasses the history of comic books. This history is based upon character appearances, comic publicati dates and numbering, cross-references between related comics, artist listings, and much, much more. Your publicatio has cultivated my interest in comics, improved my comic book knowledge, and increased the quality of my collection.

I have a couple of questions about some entries. These are questions from the 6th Edition of the Comic Book Companion.

A. Fear 20, there is an X-Man appearance that is not listed. I think it ties into Captain America 172-175. I have enclosed a copy of the appearance.

B. Firestar 2, the entry states that the cover is by Art Adams. The cover for Firestar 2 is by Mary Wilshire and Bob Wiacek. The cover for Firestar 3 is by Art Adams. Copy enclosed.

C. Spider Woman 37, the entry states that #37 is a photo cover. It is not. Please see enclosed copy.

Thanks again for your wonderful publication. Like I stated above it is invaluable in my comic collecting.

Mark Jarasitis, Washington

Thanks for the info Mark. It's support from serious collectors like you that makes Overstreet what it is.

BATMAN'S REAL 1ST APPEARANCE

Here's more info for Price Guide #23: (1) The Adventure #48 cover is by Bernard Baily. (2) The Detective #33 cover is by Kane & Robinson. (3) The All-Star #3 & #4 covers are by E.E. Hibbard. (4) The Flash #10 & #11 covers are by Moldoff. Oh, an just for the record, Batman's first appearance occurs in an ad in Action #12.

Bill Tighe, Pennsylvania

Your right, technically. Rather like Spectre's first "appearance" is in More Fun #51. Actually Action #12 deserves note as one of the most strikingly beautiful Fred Guardineer Covers ever published.

ROCKETEER VERSIONS

This letter confirms our telephone conversation on 12/4/92. I am enclosing a Xerox copy of what I call Version #1 and Version #2 of the Rocketeer 3-D Comic Book,

ighting" the "word changes" ern Version #1 and Version #2. I you will indicate this information in ext issue of your Comic Guide. PS hnical information: Version #1 - 00 printed (50,000 destroyed, 0 released). Version #2 - 100,000 d. Total Production (Released to) - 150,000 COPIES (Version #1 & on #2).

PS - I have also found out (from Mr. y Thornton, Associate Producer of 3-D Comic Book), their is a way to mine what version you have if you F NOT opened the sealed plastic elope that holds the comic book, 3-D sses, and the audio tape.

Version #1's plastic packaging has a to 11/2" space between the packaging d the contents; while version #2's kaging has no space between the stic packaging and the contents herwise called a real tight seal).

John Datz, New Jersey

ow if we could only figure out a way to em apart after they are out of the velope. Great data and documentation! anks!

OW WOW WOW

Wow Wow Wow... CBM #1 was the solute best comic collector's magazine ever seen! Incredible articles, and in lor yet!!!!!! Wow wow wow!!!!! More ore More!!!!! Count me in for the long rm. I always new you had the most curate price guide, but wow, those icles! More more more!!! You can bet will make mine Overstreet!

Jeff Edwins, Oklahoma

Wow wow wow Jeff, you've got the best se of superlatives and exclamation oints I've ever seen !!!!! More more more!!!!! Thanks for you enthusiastic upport!!!!!

IG DEAL

Your 22nd Edition lists... Fight Against the Guilty 23 (last pre-code) - Hollingsworth - a. As you can see from his Xerox copy #23 is already a code approved book. No big deal, but you might want to update your listing.

Ray Storch, California

Any data, no matter how small is a big deal to us. Thanks Ray.

SPY CASES #15

I collect war comics from 1950-1969. I recently obtained a copy of Spy Cases #15 (Atlas). Your Price Guide indicates that issues 11-14 are war format. Turns out that #15 is also a war format issue. The cover is an excellent example of Atlas war covers and all stories are war format. I hope you will find this information useful.

Wayne E. Hinson, California

Data received and incorporated. Any chance you could send us a Xerox for our permanent confirmation files?

VACUUM SEALERS

First off, I would like to congratulate you on the first publication of Comic Book Marketplace. I feel that it is the best in it's class.

I am an avid comic book collector and I am very interested in keeping my comic books in mint condition for long periods of time. I was wondering what your views would be on using one of those commercial vacuum sealers to keep and protect my books. There are many of these vacuum sealers on the market today, but would taking out all of the air as these products do and sealing it "skin tight" keep them in excellent condition for a long amount of time? On another note, do you think that it would damage more than protect in the aging process of my books? I would appreciate it if you can give me any insight as to what your best methods of long term storage may be.

Thank you for your time and your help.

Roy Balsley, Ohio

I'd be mighty careful for two reasons. One is the possibility of condensation, the other is the potential stress on spines and corners.

Call me old fashioned, but I still like my "patented" Carter double mylar system. (1) I place my book in a roomy Silver-Gold or Gold Mylar sleeve with out a backing board. (2) I then place a high quality acid-free backing board on top of (outside) the 1st mylar with the book in it. (3) I then slide this assemblage upside down in a magazine size mylar sleeve. The advantage is reduced air flow, adequate support, nothing but inert and non-abrading mylar actually touches the comic, and I can remove the comic for examination easily and quickly.

Thanks for your kind words of support. Maybe other CBM readers have a method that they can recommend. Any suggestions?

THE FIRST JOKER COVER?

First: The Joker's first cover appearance was not Detective #40 as is now stated in your guide. His first cover appearance was on Detective #62 (April 1942 issue). The villain depicted on Detective #40 cover is Clayface and it is he who appears inside the book. There is a strong resemblance to the Joker, but, you'll notice his face is in shadow, making it impossible to identify him as the Joker. Since it is Clayface in the book's story, the conclusion is obvious to me. The Joker's appearance on Detective #62 is clear and should be considered his first cover.

Second: Luther's first cover appearance was not Superman #4 as stated in you Guide. His first cover appearance was Action #47 (April 1942 issue). The bald headed man running in terror on the cover of Superman #4 is not Luther. During this early period, Luther was not depicted as being bald.

To confirm this, there are two Luther stories in Superman #4, depicting him with red hair. He was not depicted bald 'til about a year later. (I guess it was an editorial choice. He looked more like a mad scientist being bald).

Again, Luther is clearly depicted on the cover of Action #47 and appears in that issue - Bald.

(I find it rather odd, don't you?, that both the Joker and Luther made their first cover appearances in the same month, April issues 1942, both on sale in February. Two of the most famous adversaries in comic book history).

Third: The cover of Batman #27 (the 1944 Christmas cover) was drawn by Jack Burnley, not Jerry Robinson. As a long time Batman and Burnley fan, I felt all along that the cover of #27 was Burnley and this was confirmed to me by world renowned Batman collector, Joe Desris.

Check 'em out ! Hope you find the info to be valid in time for your latest issue.

Ray Belden, Illinois

Thanks Ray for your always great Golden Age info. I know many Golden Age collectors who have been fooled by the bald "pseudo-Luthor" on the cover of Supe #4 (myself included, shame on you Gary).

As for the 1st Joker cover, I still hold with Detective #40 and here's my theory as to why. If you look at the last page of Batman #1, There is a full color, full page ad for Detective #40. Compare it with the splash page of the last story in Batman 1 (second Joker story) and you will be shocked and amazed as I was. It seems that second Joker story was originally intended for Detective 40 but got pulled

at the last minute to help fill out the needed pages for Bat 1. Yet the associated cover to that Joker story was printed on Tec 40 anyway (covers are often printed way ahead of stories). I'd be interested in what other Batman collectors think about both our positions. Who knows… maybe it's actually Alfred in disguise (just kidding). My best to you Ray, It was good to hear from you.

FROM POLYBAGS TO BIG BOYS

I began collecting comics about 1 year ago for my 2 year old son, John Jr. I since have picked up on some old Archie comics and things like Ghost Stories from Charlton Comics, nothing really valuable but they're something older. And of course, the new titles of DC, Marvel, etc. My question is what are they going to do about comics that come pre-bagged from the publisher such as Superman #75 or Topps Dracula 1 & 2.

If you can't open them without lowering the value then how are you to preserve them for the future using "mylars" and etc? Also do you have or know anyone where I can order back issues of "the Adventures of Big Boy" comic?

I'm sure you are very busy, but an answer to this letter is of the utmost importance to me.

John Kaschak, Pennsylvania

Here's my opinion. Go ahead and open the bag (neatly) and preserve all the pieces in mylar. It will still be mint. There is a tiny fraction of fandom who keep them in bags, but the vast majority of reasonable and cautious collectors want to examine a book before they buy it. Not only that, but anyone can buy a machine that will re-seal the polybag. As for locating Big Boy comics, that can be tough. I'd contact some of the dealers and advisors listed in CBM. They're your best bet. It was heartening to hear you are collecting with your son in mind. Great Idea!

ANYBODY NOTICE

Anybody notice the amazing resemblance between Spawn and the Prowler in Spectacular Spider-Man Annual #10? Anybody notice a character called "Egor" in the Witching-Hour as a possible Swamp-Thing prototype? Anybody notice what's inside the pages of Witching-Hour #8 from 1970? He's big, he's ugly and he lives in a swamp!

Nick A., Canada

Anybody notice that Nick won't tell us his last name?

THE TRIMMING DILEMMA

I have a nice collection of Marvels from 1961 to 1963. When I put one on top of another, I can see that some of them are shorter than others, leading me to believe some of them have been trimmed.

In order to get two expert verifications on one book, I had to shell out $70. This method is too expensive, especially when a lot of the books are worth less than $100.

I would like to know if there is an easy (and inexpensive) way to tell if a book has been trimmed or if it's just the normal variance in the trimming process.

Thanks for your time and your fine publication. I have faithfully subscribed to your guide since 1979. I know it's the best in the field.

Peter Maric, Ohio

Well Peter, the whole topic of trimming is the topic of an upcoming article I'm writing myself. After researching the topic of trimming these past 25 years or so, I can say that it is a much more complex ID process than you might believe. May I ask your permission to defer your question for now and I promise that my upcoming article will faithfully address it. Thanks for supporting Overstreet. We appreciate it!

IN DUTCH FOR THEIR DEUTSCHE

Congratulations to your new publication. I've read the Overstreet Price Update for four years and now I've got two magazines for the same money - that's for sure anti-inflationary. I've got some questions/comments to share with you.

(1) i'm a great admirer of Mr. Gaiman's SANDMAN. I saw in a German comic book which reprints early DC Horror books like "Tales of the Unexpected," "House of Mystery" or "House of Secrets," Sandman's brother Destiny. It has to be the same Destiny, because he wears the cloak, his book is chained to his arm and he's called Destiny. Could you please tell me his first appearance and also whether the other siblings appeared in one of these old DC books (esp. Death). I know it's a hard question.

(2) Here's my nomination for an undervalued book: Batman #189 (February 1967) - First Silver Age appearance of the Scarecrow. This book meets almost the same requirements like Batman #171 the first SA-Riddler appearance. I believe it's the first Scarecrow appearance since Detective Comics # 73 from March 1943 and the third appearance everywhere. It also retells his Origin from his 1st appearance in World's Finest #3. I admit, that the Riddler is more popular, but the Scarecrow is definitely one of the most important (and interesting) characters in the awesome gallery of Batman villains.

(3) One final word about the way major US Comic Companies usually use Germans in their books: Most characters are Nazis, the townscapes look like 200 years ago, and the German dialogs are (again and again) spelled incorrectly and are a grammatical disaster. For example in the Eternal Warrior # 11 the writer used non-existent words. I've never seen such mistakes in European comic books when handling Americans or the English language.

That's all. I wish you all the best and good luck from the far Germany.

Max Miller, Germany

(1) That's an interesting conjecture, and I must say at this point I'm leaning your way. I wonder how other collectors feel? (2) Shhhh, don't tell anyone, the price will go up before I find a copy! (3) I agree. Take heart in the knowledge that most American dialogs are also spelled incorrectly and are grammatical disasters.

MANEELY DATA

We hope this helps. (1) Police Badge #479 - Atlas One Shot (#5). Last story 6 pages Joe Maneely Art. (2) Rawhide Kid - Atlas #1. 1st story splash page by Joe Maneely. Last Story Page 2 Panels 2, 5 by Joe Maneely. (3) Dynamite - Comic Media #7. 1st story has prostitute story. Other stories are reprints. We will send more info as we get it.

Garth & Kelly Wood, Canada

Luva dat data!

SIGNED CREEPY #9

I'm a friend of Bill Howard's and he introduced me to you at the San Diego Convention (I was the tall guy with the framed cheat sheet of 1967 Marvel stickers). My question is this. I purchased a collection from a man who was a collector in the 60s who attended a St. Louis comic convention in 1967. He had his copy of Creepy #9 signed by just about everyone who worked on it. I've

...d offers to put it in a couple of local ...ernic show auctions and have had cash ...ffers up to $500.00. How do I put a ...lue on such a unique item? The magazine also contains a sketch from a creepy fan member by the name of Bernie Wrightson. This piece of info may be something for CBM.

Ron Murry, California

Sorry, but I honestly have no idea. Mayhaps an enterprising CBM reader holds the lantern of truth on this question. Say hi to Bill for me.

AN EXCUSE TO PLUG OUR NEW MAGAZINE

I was very disappointed to learn of the cancellation of the old CBM. I had recently stumbled onto a copy of #19 and was looking forward to many years of happy reading. In this time of "Hot Comics" I will miss a fanzine devoted to Silver & Golden Age comics. Blunting the blow of this loss was reading the first issue of the new CBM. Hope you & Mr. Overstreet enjoy many years of quality publishing.

Dave Stuart, Canada

Count on it! Dave! And take heart advanced collectors… Check out our new quarterly Magazine for GA & SA collectors slated for publication in early July. I'm so excited about it, I'm about to chew on my Showcase 4.

T.O.S. #49

I'm writing in regard to the recent annual Overstreet Price Guide. It's been revised to list Fantastic Four #25 (April '64) as the first Avengers cross-over issue with a two panel cameo. If this brief appearance qualifies as a cross-over, then I'd like to draw your attention to Tales of Suspense #49 (Jan. '64). During the course of the story, Cyclops attempts to contact the Avengers in order to get their assistance in stopping the Angel, who has temporarily taken leave of his senses. One panel shows the Avengers (the Hulk, Thor, Giant-Man, the Wasp, and Iron Man), followed by a single panel each of Bruce Banner, Don Blake, Henry Pym with Janet Van Dyne, and Tony Stark. So, not only should T.O.S. #49 be noteworthy because of the first X-Men cross over, and the first Tales of the Watcher backup feature, AND it's one of only three issues (47-49) drawn by Steve Ditko (Whew!), but it should also be listed as the first Avengers crossover app. What do you think?

Ray Connell, Michigan

Whew! I checked it out and it's a beautiful book! What a great discovery. Thanks for sharing it with CBM readers.

IMAGINARY GL?

Yesterday, I picked up the first issue of Overstreet's Comic Book Marketplace. Nice job, but I'll miss the original CBM with it's emphasis on Golden and Silver Age books.

Now, regarding Ali T. Kokmen's letter regarding Green Lantern 59. I agree with Ali concerning "imaginary" stories, but I don't think that the notation for GL 116 is incorrect. It all depends on the way you look at it.

Remember, in Green Lantern 59 (written by John Broome, by the way), Hal Jordan discovered that there was another, equally deserving to wear the power ring-Guy Gardner. Abin Sur had chosen Hal simply because he was closer geographically.

Curious, Hal went to the Guardians. Through the use of a special device (I don't have my copy of GL 59 here with me, so I'm reconstructing the story from memory), he was allowed to see what Guy Gardner's career as Green Lantern would have been like. I believe that this "story within a story" is what is referred to as "imaginary" in the entry for #116.

Read the entries again. Green Lantern 59 was the first appearance of Guy Gardner, but the sequence featuring him as a Green Lantern was a "what if" sequence. He actually became a Green Lantern in #116, hence the "1st appearance Guy Gardner as Green Lantern" notation.

I think I'm correct here, but I'll be curious to see other opinions on this matter.

Jon M. Francis, California

Good point. I'm sure we'll hear from collectors with different viewpoints. Thanks for your thorough research.

CARD GUIDE COMMENTS

What a great "first" issue! I thoroughly enjoyed all the columns and departments, both old and new. Please permit me a few observations, comments, and suggestions.

First, I was glad to see the card price guide. The values you listed seemed just as realistic as your comic prices. Is there room for expansion? Some rather significant cards were omitted. The 1991 Impel Star Trek (series I and II, which comprised the high and low halves of the set) almost screamed in their absence. The four holograms were not advertised or announced in any way, making them a true bonus and rather prestigious collectibles. I understand the follow-up Star Trek: The Next Generation set won an award for best non-sport set of 1992. Anyone who owns the set knows why. It is beautiful and well organized. Can we see it included in your guide? Also, though I don't collect them, I know some dealers and collectors who would like to see listings for the two series (each) of Olivia and Harley-Davidson cards. Finally, how about a listing for the Doomsday #0 promo card? A dealer friend of mine (Craig Welch of The Comic Web in Republic, MO) gave me one for Christmas, but he sold three others for at least $20 each. And I've seen it other places carrying price tags as high as $50.

You're doing a monumental job. I look forward to each new issue. Keep up the good work.

Karl C. Popp, Missouri

Point well taken! We are giving our Card Guide the same serious attention as our comic pricing section. Take a look at the new expanded listing. We will be expanding our advisory network in the future with two specific goals in mind. 1st - we plan to eventually develop the most extensive and complete non-sport card price guide ever compiled. 2nd - we intend to insure that it contains the most accurate pricing in print. Thanks for your comments. And thanks to everyone who wrote in this issue. If you'd care to write, send your comments and questions to:

CBM's Marketplace Mail

P. O. Box 2610
Cleveland, TN 37320-2610

or FAX us
(615) 479-8156

Ditko's Sleepers:
Before He Started Web-Slinging

by John Hauser

I HAVE ALWAYS liked Steve Ditko art. I can remember looking through boxes and boxes of old Charltons, trying to find any that had Ditko art. If they did, I bought them. And if they didn't, I usually left them behind. After years of "scouring the countryside" for these wonderful books, I, like many, have come to realize how scarce early Ditko books can be (and that high grade copies are practically impossible to find). Because these books are almost never bought and sold, they rise in price very slowly. When you factor in quality and scarcity, almost any 1950s and early 60s comic with a Ditko story seems like a bargain. Consider the following examples:

© Charlton Comics

Although a number of artists would render the Mysterious Traveler in comics and other print media, Steve Ditko's unique characterization is considered by most collectors to be the best.

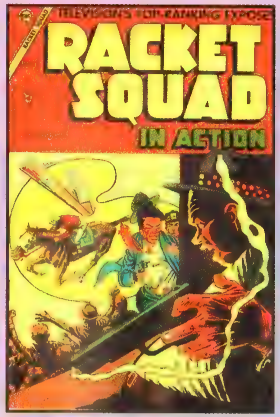
Fantastic Fears #5
This book contains the first Ditko story (don't be confused by publishing dates, it took awhile to be printed). This book is in great demand as of late (just ask any dealer) and has been selling for over guide. Many think this book is a steal at $250.

Thing #12
This book is the first Ditko cover and it contains a great pre-code Ditko story. This book just has to be worth more than its present $300 price.

Thing #14
Every page in this book was done by Ditko. The stories are truly gruesome and a must for every horror collector. Books which are "all Ditko" always seem like a bargain to me. Even though $300 will not go far in the current Silver Age market, it will buy almost any great pre Spider-Man Ditko book, including this one.

Thing #15
A truly great cover showing the famous (infamous?) evil worm grown to gigantic proportions and threatening the world. Also an "all Ditko" issue with some superb stories. $300.

The comics shown here are just a sampling of the great work that Ditko turned out during the 50's and 60's



© Charlton Comics

Strange Suspense Stories #19
This has got to be Ditko's most "electrifying" cover and is one of the great horror covers of all time. At $135 this one is definitely a sleeper.

Racket Squad In Action #11
This book is scarcer than Racket Squad In Action #12 and has a Ditko cover and story, yet at $90 it remains significantly less than the price of the #12 ($165)!

Tales of the Mysterious Traveler
Most issues of this title have some of the best work Steve Ditko did at Charlton. The presence of a continuing character to introduce the stories give this title a certain special flavor that was unique for Ditko books. All the Ditko stories and covers are excellent! NM94 Guide price ranges from $125 to $170 for Near Mint copies… if you can find 'em.

Strange Tales #97
Containing the "first appearance" of Aunt May, this issue is difficult to find and has been selling at over guide for more than two years now. NM94 at $150 means this book has a lot of room to grow.

World of Fantasy #17, #18, #19
These three books have Kirby covers and Ditko stories. While other pre-superhero Marvels have been sky rocketing in price for two years these books have not gone up much at all. Whenever you can find one, buy it!. They are a genuine "steal" at the current NM94 price of $50. FN65 price is only $25!! If you find these at guide, clutch them til your fingers hurt!

As you can imagine, the task of narrowing the list of pre Spider-Man Ditko recommendations is difficult at best. Almost all are undervalued when compared with Spider-Man. The list above contains some standout Ditko books that I think are still a bargain, especially when you consider age, scarcity, and historical significance. Plus an added bonus lest we forget… they are GREAT reading!!! ■

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JLA...

Brave But Bold Investment

Part of the genius of DC's editor Julius Schwartz was his ability to innately know what would light the fires of young readers imaginations, while at the same time using familiar techniques that would rekindle the memories of those older readers who remembered the Good Old Days of the Golden Age. One of these Golden Age reincarnations was to become known as The Justice League of America.

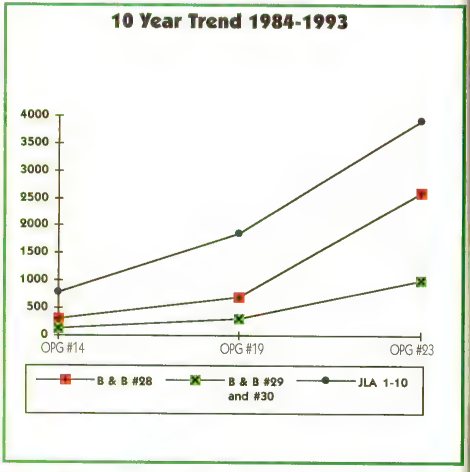
Their initial appearance in The Brave and Bold #28 (Feb-Mar 1960), was preceded only 20 years before in All Star #3 (Winter 1940) by the original superhero team known as The Justice Society of America. Innovated by editor Sheldon Mayer, the JSA team consisted of Sandman, the Atom, the Spectre, the Flash, Hawkman, Dr. Fate, the Green Lantern, and Hourman. The new-look 60's modern superhero team of the JLA consisted of the Flash, Green Lantern, Superman, Aquaman, Batman, Wonder Woman, and the Martian Manhunter. As additional revivals of Golden Age heroes occurred during the 1960's, the Atom and Hawkman in particular, these characters would ultimately gain admittance to the JLA (the Atom issue #14 and Hawkman issue #31).

Schwartz was so enamored of his JLA concept that he decided to reutilize Gardner F. Fox, known around DC as the Dean of Science Fiction, who also did the original writing chores for the JSA. Fox's formula was basic for most of his JLA stories. The team gets together at the beginning of the story; a mystery, challenge or threat presents itself; the group divides up and then sets out to conquer the aliens, evil genius or other villainous superpowers, then gets together at the end of the story to discuss how they have resolved the problem—one story compacted into one issue!

This was not the only how to tradition that Schwartz was to utilize. When it is understood that one concept works, never let it be said that you cannot use it again. Take a look and compare the cover of All Star Comics #42 (Aug-Sep 1948) with that of Justice League of America #6 (Sep 1961); All Start Comics #43 (Oct-Nov 1948) with The Brave and the Bold #29 (May 1960) and Justice League of America #29 (Aug 1964) with All Star Comics #8 (Dec-Jan 1942—the First Wonder Woman issue). In issue #21 (Aug 1963) of Justice League of America, Schwartz decided that the JSA and the JLA would meet and confront the Crisis on Earth One. After more than a decade of JSA inactivity, and a few grey hairs and wrinkles, the two groups join for the first time in a series of adventures to battle evil and oppression.

Several of the Justice League of America's classic covers (#1, #3, & #4) can be attributed to what many collectors consider the master of Silver Age artists, Murphy Anderson. The difficulty in drawing the many different characters finally took it's toll and Anderson relinquished the chores to the able skills of Mike Sekowsky. Many talented artists followed Sekowsky's rendition of the JLA issues including the likes of Neal Adams, Jim Aparo, Mike Grell, Gil Kane, Joe Kubert and George Perez.

While certainly not at the fevered peak of popularity with the investors/speculators of today's hot book comic scene, the JLA has shown a steady rock-solid increase in value over a sustained time period. Many JLA devotees believe that the most difficult issues among the first 10 JLA books to find in grade are #3 (Feb-Mar 1961) Slave Ship of Space —brilliant black cover!); #6 (Aug-Sep 1961 The Wheel of Misfortune -a blue background that shows every



By Michael Naiman

Chart on facing page: Looking back over the last decade, early JLA performs well, especially B&B #28.

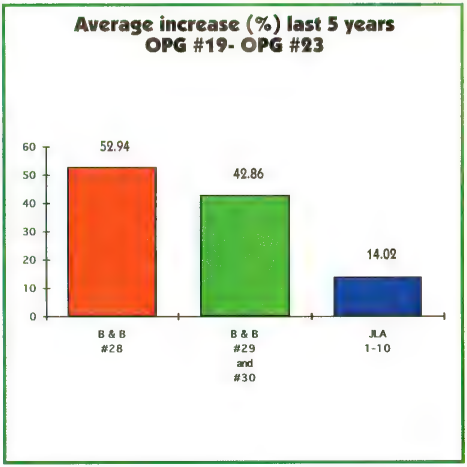
Chart at left: In the last year all early JLA appearances show marked increase.

Chart Below: When the percent of increase is averaged over the last five years, B&B #28 appears to be a winner.

misfortune -a blue background that shows every defect); #4 (Apr-May 1961 Doom of the Star Diamond—the orange is a tough one not to get stress marks at the spine) and #10 (Mar 1962 The Fantastic Fingers of Felix Faust —the yellow background always seems to attract dirt).

The Justice League of America's long run (over 20 years) and major influence on the Silver Age cannot be discounted. Remember, it was because of their popularity that Marvel developed it's own team competitor some years later. The Fantastic Four! The Justice League of America's ability to span the generations of comic book fans, drawing from the old and new, has insured them a spot in the comic book Hall of Fame.

The following charts demonstrate the increases in value that have occurred during the last 1,5, and 10 years in the Brave and Bold issues (#28-#30) and the first 10 issues of the JLA ■



Ten Red-Sizzlin' Hot Comics That Turned Ice Cold

By Erik Andresen

Those collectors who are industriously sealing signed gold Wildcats in mylar bags and busy calculating how much money they will make on Turok #1 may be mildly amused to find out that certain comics have been hot before and (this is the kicker) those comics that were hot in the past are different from the ones that are hot now! In fact, any empirical study of past market trends would seem to indicate that hot items are absolutely, bar none, the worst long term investment that one can make! Why this occurs is simple economics. The price of any item is a function of supply and demand. With a hot item, the demand curve is stretched to its virtual limit. The only way the price can rise is if demand increases even more, which, in the long run, it can't. If any item could consistently rise in value at a faster than average rate, then it would eventually be worth more than the entire gross domestic product of all the nations on earth and everything there is in the entire world combined. This is unlikely to happen, except possibly for a few select pre-Unity Valiant gold editions

Those of you who are casually acquainted with the history of comic book collecting are no doubt vaguely aware of a once hot project here and there that "went south". However, you may be harboring under the delusion that these books were the exception and not the rule. In reality, though, reading any "what's hot" list published in the not too distant past reveals an endless graveyard of "overpriced white elephants". The exception is actually finding a hot comic that actually maintained its value.

What follows is an account of ten comic books that were once "Red-Sizzling Hot" and are now stone dead cold. They are not necessarily the ten coldest comics. Rather, each comic became hot for a different reason and each represents a group of comics that were, or are, or will be, hot for similar reasons. "Hear me now and believe me later. Those who do not study the past are doomed to repeat it."

Finally, before we get to the list, let me state categorically that these are not bad comics. In fact, many of them are great comics with wonderful art and story, which is why many of them became hot in the first place. These comics have never changed. Only the public's perception of them have. No disparagement should be cast upon these books or their creators. However, some of the dealers that sold them as "can't miss investment opportunities" should be boiled in oil. And now (drum roll please)... TEN COMICS THAT USED TO BE RED-SIZZLIN' HOT BUT ARE NOW ICE COLD!

Howard The Duck #1

HOTTEST CHARACTER OF 1979! Howard .. Hot writer! Steve Gerber... Hot artist! Frank Brunner... Conan parody! Hot! Spider-Man crossover! Hot! First book of a hot new genre! The cigar smoking wisecracking talking duck genre. Hard as it may seem today, this was once the hottest comic book on the planet. It peaked in Overstreet at $12 in 1979, twice as much as Captain America #100, but showed up at the more trendy stores for $35-$50. I heard rumors that it went as high as $135 in California. Related to its success were Fear #19, Howard's first appearance, and Giant Size Man Thing #4 and #5. Unfortunately, a nasty Disney lawsuit brought the whole thing to an abrupt crash Today you'd be lucky to get five bucks for the lot, but at one time you could have easily traded all four even up for a mint X-Men #1, or if you played your cards right, maybe even a high-grade Amazing Fantasy #15. Technically, you might have been able to trade a copy of Howard The Duck #1 for up to 600 mint copies of Hulk #181, which would currently have a street value of roughly $200,000. Seriously, though, Howard The Duck #1 is a historically significant book and the legal battles that were fought over Howard's creator's rights revolutionized the industry. Look for this book to bounce back to the $10 range within our lifetime.

Fish Police #1 (1st print)

The year is 1985. Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles #1, published just a year ago, is selling for up to $200 in California. Short printed, black and white, #1 issues featuring anthropomorphic crime fighting animals are hot! The question is not whether you will invest in this book. It is simply how many copies will you buy? Typical of the black and white implosion, this comic was hot before it even came out, and was readily selling for $20 before #2 even hit the stands. It eventually got as high as $50 until people came to their senses. Today, you'd be lucky to get a buck for it. Of course, nothing like this could ever happen to today's Image and Valiant titles (except maybe in California). What's interesting about the black and white implosion is that the books in question are considered common, although their print runs were typically less than 20,000. Today, certain hot projects, such as Spider-Man #1, X-Force #1 and Superman #75, have print runs in the millions. There are approximately 300 copies of X-Force #1 for each common copy of Fish Police #1 (1st print).

G.I. Joe #2

The G.I. Joe comic was an unexpected hit, and it seemed like every spoiled brat in the world was trying to complete a set. It was soon realized that, because there was some multiple-copy speculation on #1 (there always is), that #2 seemed like having the potential of every Image and Valiant comic combined into one. It sold so well at $70 that some dealers began asking $100 for it. Condition was hardly a factor, and I remember that a poor to fair water soaked copy that was uncovered at a garage sale sold in a local comic store for $50. Nothing could keep the G.I. Joe phenomenon down. Marvel reprinted many early issues, and the second prints began to sell for half as much as the originals! G.I. Joe #2 second prints sold for $10 before the ink was dry. Other toy and cartoon related comics became equally hot, including Transformers, Thundercats, and Micronauts. The G.I. Joe explosion didn't translate well to older titles, and you still couldn't give away copies of Sgt. Rock or Sgt. Fury to G.I. Joe devotees. New war titles fared well, especially NAM #1, which peaked at $15-$20. Then suddenly, it was all over. Today, even people who frantically collect GI JOE figures rarely seek out the comics. G.I. Joe may become respectable in the future. The title is still chugging along, now past #125, and the toy line is incredibly popular, but it

seems unlikely that it will fully regain its former prominence.

Donald Duck Tells About Kites

Just in case you thought that old and rare comics were immune from the "Hot Syndrome", beware! In 1979 there was a massive craze for both odd giveaway comics, and Carl Barks art. As a result, a single copy of DDTAK priced out in 1979 for more than an entire mint run of Spider-Man. It has subsequently become one of the hobby's biggest white elephants. Few collectors are willing to meet its high price tag $1800, yet predictably, few owners are willing to part with it at a lower price. In the resulting standoff, those who own a copy are stuck with it, and the guide price hasn't budged an inch in 15 years. A similar situation exists with other hot giveaways, including If The Devil Would Talk, Blood Is The Harvest, and March Of Comics #4, #20, and #41.

Shock Suspenstories #13

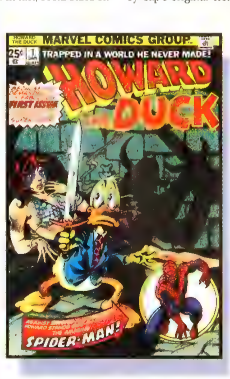
In 1970, this book guided for as much as Fantastic Four #1. By 1979, it cost as much as X-Men #1. Today, it costs less than the first appearance of Ace, the Bat-Hound. Shock Suspenstories #13 contains Frank Frazetta's only solo EC story and illustrates what I feel is an important rule of comic investing that many ignore: The only thing less hot than a retired comic artist is a publisher that stopped printing forty years ago. In fact, books based on a hot artist continue to pan out as among the worst long-term investments one can make. The problem is that the artist is replaced in the public eye by another hot artist. Other artists that were hot in the 1970's were: Neal Adams, Joe Kubert, Jack Kirby, Wally Wood, Carl Barks, Jim Steranko, John Stanley, Jim Starlin, Will Eisner, and Don Newton. These are all great artists, but their key books became overpriced, which hurt their collectibility.

Legion Of Super-Heroes #287

Keith Giffen, God bless him, is one of the most gifted comic book writers and artists of all time. Almost every project he touches becomes blazing red hot, and then suddenly the whims of the market change and it becomes stone dead cold. At a time when the New Teen Titans was DC's fastest selling book, Giffen's Legion books were sizzling sellers, with #287 considered the most "key" issue and selling as high as $18. Giffen's next project, The Omega Men, was also hot (up to $10 for #1), but interest in it failed to revive the collectible status of Legion Later, Giffen's Ambush Bug was on fire, but this did nothing for The Omega Men or Legion . Giffen's latest hot achievement is Lobo, which briefly revived interest in The Omega Men, but only the Lobo issues. Other hot artists of this period were Frank Miller, John Byrne, and George Perez. All of these giants have seen their key books turn from gold to iron in the market through no fault of their own. Don't worry, though. This could never happen to Todd McFarlane, Rob Leifeld, or Dale Keown.....?

Shazam #1

This is the first known case of massive over-speculation ruining the collectible value of a comic book. In 1972, Shazam #1 seemed like a "can't miss investment goldmine". It was to be the first appearance of Captain Marvel in nearly twenty years, featuring brand new art and story by Cap's original creative team, CC Beck and Otto Binder. Considering that Captain Marvel Adventures was once the "World's Largest Selling Comic Magazine", how could one miss? The investment opportunity was so obvious that a group of speculators reportedly bought nearly half of the entire print run before it hit the stands. Allegedly, the impact was so great that the book never even saw daylight in several western states. In the resulting shortage, the price of the comic quickly hit $2, with rumors that it was as high as $20 in California. This may not seem like a lot now, but new comics were 20 cents back then. Anyway, Shazam #1 can still be found for $2, though finding a buyer is a little harder. Rumor has it that some individuals still have as many as 17,000 copies.



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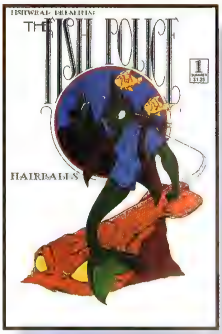


© Steve Moncuse

Thor #337

Walt Simonson's innovative contribution to the Norse God Saga made an immediate impact on collectors, and the resulting feeding frenzy caught comic stores by surprise. Marvel couldn't handle all the requests for reorders, and even diverted newsstand copies to help quench demand. The shortage caused higher prices, which in turn created an even greater frenzy of speculation and curiosity. Thor #337 hit $7.50 in some areas before #338 was even out. Comic stores ordered heavily on subsequent issues, leading to over saturation on issues #339-341. When they could no longer triple their money every five seconds, a lot of people gave up on the series, which is a shame because it was really well done. In fact the brief exchange between Thor and Clark Kent on Page 8 of Thor #341 is one of the all time great moments in comic book history.

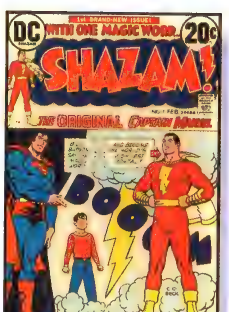
Batman: The Dark Knight Limited Signed Hard Cover Edition

Frank Miller's Dark Knight limited series was the sensation of 1986, spawning massive new interest in Batman which culminated in the 1989 movie. At the height of its popularity, DC released a signed hard cover limited edition

(4000 copies) of the series which was distributed (one per dealer) at the modest wholesale cost of $40. Considering that Dark Knight #1s were flying off the shelves at $75, the marketplace soon valued the limited hard cover at just slightly less than the Mona Lisa. Rumors abounded of dealers selling their copies for $600 to $1200. Another rumor stated that highly placed people at DC didn't get a personal copy and were willing to pay almost anything to get one. The highest price I ever heard of was $2000 in California, but that might have just been a story spread to justify the $1200 tag. Anyway, the price eventually stabilized around $400, because anybody who has a copy refuses to sell for less, though nobody wants to buy.

Zot Mini Comics #1

Not all black and white independents of the 1980's were haphazardly dashed together by unscrupulous profiteers or purchased by disinterested speculators. The black and whites were really more the result of a self-publishing craze whereby creative individuals would produce and market their own creations. Many of these books were bought and read by die hard fans, who were generally under the impression that they were experiencing the beginnings of a new Golden Age of comics. Zot was a book that had a small but enthusiastic following, and when



© DC Comics

the color title was canceled after ten issues, a black and white mini comic was produced. The mini comic was an ingenious notion in self publishing. Generally consisting of one or two sheets of paper, xeroxed on both sides and folded down, a mini comic could be produced on any photocopier in any quantity desired. The best part was that the mini comic was apparently an instrument by which independents could be fun and cheap again without the risk of being ruined by speculation. The Zot Mini Comic was kicking around at 25 cents when it was reported that somebody bought a copy for $10. Suddenly, anybody who had a copy wanted $10 for a copy, though there was apparently only one person in the whole dang world who wanted that book that desperately, and he already had one! All of a sudden, though, there was a mini comic boom! There were all sorts of reasons why mini comics were the "in thing" for speculators: Small print runs means scarcity! Small cover price means you can speculate without losing your shirt! Small size meant they were easy to store and carry! Who knew what undiscovered genius was breaking into comics by Xeroxing a few mini comics during their lunch hour? Obviously, if money was to be made, it was with the great new wave of mini comics!!! This was apparently the last straw for the comic book Gods, who caused the entire independent market to implode very quickly thereafter.

The Wrap-Up

OK, boys and girls, there you have it. Ten can't miss hot investment picks that failed. What have we learned? You can recap by looking at my ten laws of collecting (left.)

Another way to say it is: The future value of your collection should not be more important than your present enjoyment of it. If you collect primarily for fun, then you will not be devastated by minor fluctuations in the market, and if you happen to make a profit then that's a bonus, but it should not be the sole reason for collecting. If you do insist on speculating, you have been warned that nothing stays hot forever, and that nothing is more frigid than a once red hot book gone cold.

Thanks for reading. Film at eleven. I welcome your comments. Happy Collecting! ■

Write to Erik Andresen

via CBM

P.O. Box 2610

Cleveland, TN 37320-2610

ANDRESEN'S 10 LAWS OF COMIC BOOK COLLECTING:

1 Never invest in a comic character that is going to be sued out of existence by Walt Disney.

2 Never pay 10 times cover for the first appearance of a character that has only made one appearance.

3 Never invest in a comic that every kid in the neighborhood has to have, because next week they'll all have to have something else.

4 Never spend more than $1000 for any eight page comic with an educational theme

5 Never invest long-term in a hot artist because he will be replaced by another hot artist.

6 Never speculate long term in anything written or drawn by Keith Giffen (God Bless 'em).

7 Never pay 100 times cover for a book when more than half the print run is in the hands of less than 6 people.

8 Even a great comic can be destroyed as a collectible by speculators.

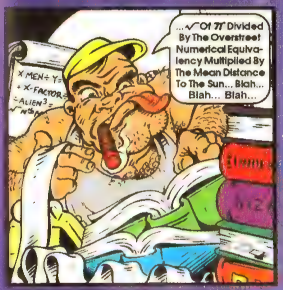
9 If you ever obtain anything that was only available one per retailer, sell it as soon as you can while the gettin's good.

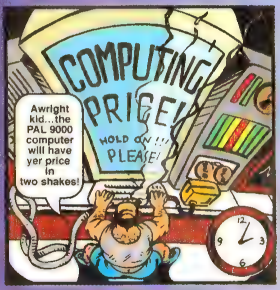
10 Never value anything at the highest price that the person most desperate to own it would pay on a good day, and never follow a "hot tip".

Script: Gray W. Tracer
Art: Shannon Gallant

SHOP TALK

How much for your Near Mint X-GUYS #574 with the die-cut, hologram, prism foil cover?
I'll have yer price in jes' a minute, kid!
WE SELL
YOU BUY


X MEN + Y-MEN + X-FACTOR = ALIEN3
...√Of 'π' Divided By The Overstreet Numerical Equivalency Multiplied By The Mean Distance To The Sun... Blah... Blah... Blah...



LEFT:
Sotheby's auction consultant, Jerry Weist admires an original painting featuring a rare combination. Batman and a Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtle.

RIGHT:
Dr. Pat Kochanek and Dr. Joe Dungan diagnosing the condition of several early *Brave & Bold* issues. Prognosis; Very Fine.

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF COMIC BOOK COLLECTORS
GRADING COMMITTEE

LEFT:
The entire committee admiring the White Mountain copy of *Amazing Fantasy* #15. The 1993 AACBC Grading Committee from left to right. Dr. Joe Dungan, Dr. Pat Kochanek, Bruce Edwards, John Hauser, Gary M. Carter (Chair), Joseph H. Vereaneault, and James Payette

LEFT:
Gary M. Carter examines the first few issues of a large and beautiful run of Silver Age DC.

BELOW:
Jerry Weist admits an original Carl Barks oil painting to the auction.

*FOR FURTHER INFORMATION
about the upcoming Sotheby's auction,
see advertisement elsewhere in this issue.

MIDDLE LEFT:
Original Art Consultant Roger Hill and the extremely rare and historic cover art to *Motion Picture Funnies Weekly* #1 (1939) from the original archives of the Funnies Inc. Studio.

LEFT:
Jerry Weist, Dana Hawks, and Roger Hill enjoying three rare examples of early EC original cover art.

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CBM GALLERY OF GREATS

"THE MIGHTIEST TEAM ON EARTH!"

BY STEVE GENTNER

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BATMAN, THE WORLD'S GREATEST DETECTIVE, JOINS FORCES WITH THE MAN OF STEEL TO BECOME ...
"The MIGHTIEST TEAM ON EARTH!"
LOIS IN PANGER! THIS IS A JOB FOR SUPERMAN!
NO, THIS IS A JOB FOR BATMAN!

© DC Comics

Superman and Batman appeared together for the first time on the cover of New York World's Fair Comics 1940, which was also the first of many superb covers by Golden Age artist and legend, Jack Burnley. Amazingly, it was Burnley's first cover ever, as well as the first DC comic to be originally cover priced at 15¢. Subsequent covers and stories which followed in World's Best #1 and then World's Finest #2 showcased DC's two top characters together on the cover, but always separately in their own adventures inside. Even All-Star Comics only barely scratched the surface of the teams potential.

Then, 12 years later in the fateful spring of 1952, Superman #76 (May-Jun 1952) made comic history with its now famous story "The Mightiest Team on Earth!" Having the two largest celestial bodies in the DC firmament, Batman and Superman together in one story might have been enough. The editors and writers knew readers just might have been content watching the master detective from Gotham City and the guardian of Metropolis combine their skills against a common foe. Yet, incredibly, the brain trust at DC decided to add even more fireworks to an already sensational story line. An extra twist in the plot was added; the two heroes suddenly, without warning, simultaneously discover each other's secret identities!! The main storyline centering on a jewel thief is almost superfluous when compared with this enormous revelation!

But wait... the surprises aren't over yet! For the first time in history it's Batman who rescues Lois from certain death, not Superman. Also Miss Lane's standard suspicion regarding Clark Kent's dual identity as Superman is over shadowed when she also suspects Bruce Wayne is the Batman! Lois overhears Superman and Batman discussing how they plan to outwit her, and she, in turn, succeeds in generating jealousy between her two costumed protagonists. As you might suspect, together, Superman and Batman eventually outwit the crafty and curious Lois.

History marks many examples of fateful meetings between literary titans. Beowulf and Grendel, Holmes and Watson, and finally, Superman and Batman! Superman #76 gave us all we could hope for (and more), at a time when the reading public wasn't even sure they wanted costumed heroes anymore. In fact it was this historical "low point" in the history of the superhero that likely generated this pioneering moment in comic book history. Despite the growing public outrage at comic book "depravity" during the early fifties, DC hung in there with one of the all time great "Sunday-punch" stories and the beginning of a 40 year legacy for "The Mightiest Team on Earth!" ■

A Report On The Discovery of the LLoyd V. Jacquet Estate "Pay Copies" of *Marvel Comics* #1 and *Motion Picture Funnies Weekly* #1

Since 1975, the debate over which came first - *Marvel Comics* #1 or *Motion Picture Funnies Weekly* #1 - has continued, back and forth, between collectors and dealers, with no permanent solution or answer arrived at.

Marvel Comics #1, dated Oct. and Nov. 1939 (two versions) is considered the flagship title of Timely Publications (now known as Marvel Comics) and showcased the debut adventures of The Human Torch by Carl Burgos, The Angel by Paul Gustavson, The Sub-Mariner by Bill Everett, Kazar The Great by Ben Thompson and other less-memorable characters and stories. Due to its given recognition as the first Timely/Marvel comic ever produced, plus the added distinction of having presented the debut appearances of characters that would continue to develop and become sustaining icons of the Marvel Universe, *Marvel Comics* #1 has become one of the most valued comic books in the marketplace.

© Marvel

In 1974, several copies of the premium comic book *Motion Picture Funnies Weekly* #1, along with other related memorabilia, turned up in the estate of one Lloyd V. Jacquet. Jacquet had been involved with the comics as early as 1935 when he edited the first issues of *New Fun Comics* for National Allied Publishing Inc. (the first DC comic book). Later, Jacquet assembled a staff of writers and artists to create complete packages of stories and art for various comic book publishers who didn't have the resources or experience to do it themselves. The Jacquet shop operated under the business name of **Funnies Incorporated**, out of offices located at 45 W. 45th St. in New York. It was here that the entire contents for both *Marvel Comics* #1 and *Motion Picture Funnies Weekly* #1 was created. The difference between the two was that the contents of *Marvel Comics* #1 had been created specifically for Timely Publications to publish as a newsstand distributed comic book, while the contents of *Motion Picture Funnies Weekly* #1 was packaged and published under Jacquet's own publishing company label (First Funnies Incorporated) as a movie theater premium.

The discovery of *Motion Picture Funnies Weekly* #1 in the Jacquet estate presented a two-part surprise to organized Fandom at that time: (1) It appeared no one had ever seen a copy of this comic book before, thus assuring its immediate status as an extremely rare item. (2) The comic featured the first 8 pages (in black and white) of the color 12 page origin story of Bill Everett's Sub-Mariner that appeared in *Marvel Comics* #1.

Upon close inspection of the 12 page Sub-Mariner story presented in *Marvel Comics* #1, it seems obvious that the first 8 pages were meant to serve as an introduction, while the additional 4 pages at the tail-end, appear to be more of an after-thought short story adventure sequence.

For years the *Marvel Comics* #1 version of the story had baffled historians and collectors who wondered why, for no apparent reason, a blank box had been placed in the last panel at the bottom of page 8. The *Motion Picture Funnies Weekly* #1, with its 8 page version of the story, now provided a possible answer; the box was not blank and contained the words **"continued next week."**

Several other details or differences between the two Sub-Mariner versions and the comics themselves inevitably led to the controversy and on-going debate over which comic book had actually appeared first. Two differently dated versions of *Marvel Comics* #1 exists: Oct. and Nov., 1939 editions, and *Motion Picture Funnies Weekly* #1 is dated 1939, with no month indicated. The debate over which actually came first has been recently re-fueled by the actual issues pictured in this article.

Now, almost twenty years after the discovery of *Motion Picture Funnies Weekly* #1, it is fair to say that some basic conclusions can be made. These conclusions do not necessarily depend on which book was actually prepared or packaged first by the Jacquet shop, or when the comics were printed and distributed by the two different companies involved. The legitimacy of copyright and distribution methods might actually be the key to a realistic settlement of the issue. *Marvel Comics* #1 is favored by some as a legitimate "published first" contender, based on the simple fact that it was distributed throughout the usual comic book retail outlets in late 1939. Further, were actually received by the Library of Congress in September of that year to secure the copyright.

No copies of *Motion Picture Funnies Weekly* #1 were ever filed with the Library of Congress and the comic was not distributed on the newsstands. Instead it was sent to theater managers as advance sample copies (only, few of which might have been given out to the movie-going public). Interestingly, the covers for *Motion Picture Funnies Weekly* #2 through #4 were prepared and printed (in proof form only) but the interior pages of the proposed books were never completed or printed. Even though *Marvel*

Comics #1 seems to get more "historic respect" from Fandom, largely due to its legitimate distribution. Not only that, but it also features the longer 12 page version of Bill Everett's Sub-Mariner story and Carl Burgos' origin story of The Human Torch.

On the other hand, the fact remains that *Motion Picture Funnies Weekly* #1 is a much rarer book. According to *Overstreet's Comic Book Price Guide*, there are only 8 copies of *Motion Picture Funnies Weekly* #1 known to exist while it estimates that up to 50 copies of *Marvel Comics* #1 exists.

For the first time in Fandom's history, the actual file Pay-Copy editions of *Marvel Comics* #1 (Nov 1939, pictured at right) and *Motion Picture Funnies Weekly* #1 (pictured at left) from the Lloyd V. Jacquet estate have now surfaced and are being offered at auction.

The Pay-Copy designation is derived from the fact that each of these comics are Lloyd Jacquet's personal business file copies, and contain his annotated notes detailing the check numbers and amounts paid to the artists who created their contents. Each of the number one issues has "Pay-Copy" written across its cover, and, except in one instance, complete check notations are all found inside. The notations (in pencil) found on the cover or inside *Marvel Comics* #1, are as follows:

Cover: A large "x" along with wordage "Pay-Copy". Also penciled notations "Check #115, 7/31/39, Check #115 cover $25.00"

Inside front cover: "Joke page, Fred Schwab, $6.00"

First page of Human Torch story by Carl Burgos: (top border area): "check #106, 7/25/39, $128.00 - 16 pages"

First page of The Angel story by Paul Gustavson (top border area): "Check #109, 7/31/39 - $64.00 - 8 pages"

First page of The Sub-Mariner story by Bill Everett (top border area): "Check #110 $83.25 L. Jac 32 7/31/39 #110 64 96.00 paid 12 pages"

First page of The Masked Raider story by Mahon (top border area): "Mahon #202 - $72.00 - 8 pages"

First page of Jungle Terror story by Tomm Dixon (top border area): "Check #111 7/31/39 - $48.00 6 pages"

First page of two-page text story Burning Rubber (top border area): "Check 113 7/31/39 Story $5.00 114 7/31/39 III $3.00".

First page of Kazar the Great story by Ben Thompson (top border area): "#108 7/31/39 - $120.00 - 12 pages".

The notation (in ink) found on the cover, or inside *Motion Picture Funnies Weekly* #1, are as follows:

Cover: A large X along with wordage: "Pay-Copy".

Inside front cover: "Jack Cole 2 cover, Check #102, 8/22/39, $10.00".

First Page of Kartoon and his Copy Cat story by Martin Filchock (top border area): "paid Check #107, 7/28/39 $8.00".

Other features, in order of sequence, but with no notation: The Sub-Mariner (8 pages) by Bill Everett. Jolly the Newsie (6 pages) by George Peter. The Spy Ring (6 pages) by Jay Fletcher. American Ace (7 pages) by Paul J. Lauretta.

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STILL A MYSTERY: Obviously, there is a two-part configuration apparent on the payment made to Bill Everett for his 12 pages of Sub-Mariner artwork. There is no immediate reasoning as to why two #110 checks are noted; the first one for $83.25 and a second for $96.00. Accept for Ben Thompson's Kazar story, Mahon's Masked Raider story, and the text illustration for Burning Rubber, all other artists were paid the rate of $8.00 per page. The first notation for Check #110, in the amount of $83.25 does not compute out to an even dollar amount for a page rate. The other check #110, for $96.00 computes out to $8.00 per page, based on the twelve page count. The two entries of 32 and 64 placed on top of each other, and totaled together for the $96.00 amount, confirms the already noted idea of an additional four pages of art being added to eight pages, for a total of twelve. Out of all the notations made in this comic book, why is this the only one with L. Jac written in? The check #110 for the amount of $83.25 confuses the payment issue considerably, and is yet to be satisfactorily explained.

Although there has been no date that pinpoints the exact publication date of *Motion Picture Funnies Weekly* #1 it seems possible that *Marvel Comics* #1 may have been printed first or at least at the same time as *MPFW* #1. This conjecture is based on evidence that Bill Everett was paid for all twelve pages of the artwork for the Sub-Mariner story as a part of the contents of *Marvel Comics* #1. Was Everett paid first for what was published second? We may never have definitive evidence one way or the other. Even so, there is a growing number of collectors who are, for the first time, at least considering the "*Marvel Comics* #1 came first" theory.

A FINAL NOTE regarding condition. The 1993 Grading Committee (AACBC) for Sothebys gave the *Marvel Comics* #1 a grade which averaged out at VF84 (VF+) with interior paper of OWL 8.5. The *Motion Picture Funnies Weekly* #1 averaged out at VF89 (VF++) with interior paper of OWL 9. Several members of the Grading Committee commented that they felt the Lloyd Jacquet *Marvel Comics* #1 is one of the most historically significant comics ever found.

Many members also felt that the "pay Copy" represented the best known copy (whitest pages and the most perfect printed registration. *Marvel Comics* #1 is notorious for off-registration printing on the interior pages.) The *Overstreet Comic Book Price Guide* estimates only four copies exist in VF or above condition. ■

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THE RAREST MARVEL ANNUAL?

For three decades, comic book collectors have been enamored with perfect bound (square bound) comic books. Often called "annuals" (whether they are published once a year or not), they hold a special fascination for several reasons. First, because they are thicker and have more pages, these "jumbo" issues offer more reading enjoyment than a standard comic book. Second, they often provide the approximate equivalent of three comics for the price of two and a half. And third, experienced collectors are acutely aware that square bound comics are much more difficult to find in higher grades.

Cover Courtesy of Gary Reitmeyer

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Silver Age Marvel collectors have searched for years for high grade copies of their "Holy Grail" of Marvel annuals. *Strange Tales Annual* #1 has long dominated collector interest because many believed it to be the first Marvel annual. And yet, the annual pictured at left is at least of equivalent age if not older. Not only that, but ask any dealer which of the early Marvel annuals they see least. Nearly every one will, without doubt, quickly confirm that it is the Big *Millie The Model Annual* #1 that truly holds its rightful position as "the rarest Marvel annual". ■

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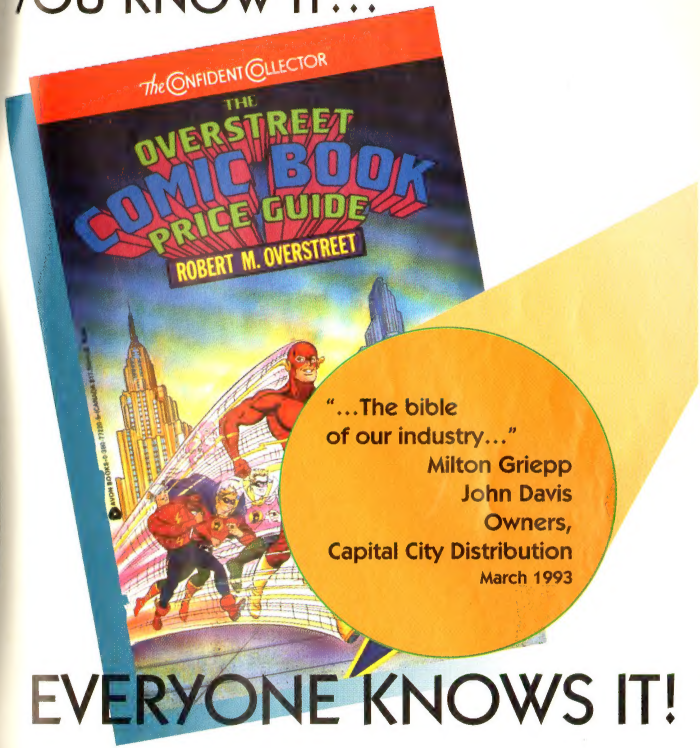

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